THE
First Sermon,
PREACHED TO
THE HONOVRABLE
HOVSE OF COMMONS
now assembled in *Parliament*
at their *Publique Fast.*
Novemb. 17. 1640. Tuesday

BY
CORNELIUS BURGES Doctor
of Divinitie.

Published by Order of that House.

LONDON,
Printed by *I. L.* for *Philemon Stephens* and *Christopher Meredith*, at the signe of the Golden Lion in *Pauls* Church-yard. 1641.

(10)

TO
THE HONOVRABLE
HOVSE OF COMMONS
now Assembled in PARLIAMENT.

WHen first it pleased You *to require our service in Preaching at* Your *late Publike* Fast, *we resolved to close our eyes against all Clouds of discouragement arising from our owne unworthinesse and insufficiency, and to set our selves wholly to seek what the Lord would command us to deliver in his Name, at such a time, to such an Honourable and awfull Assembly, with a totall deniall of our selves.* Psalm. 82.

And albeit we should have beene glad to have beene spared this exposing of our selves to the

publike view; yet, You *appointing otherwiſe, we hold it equall that the joynt* entreaty *of the* Repreſentative Body *of the whole* Communalty *of the kingdome ſhould be regarded, and have choſen rather that others ſhould cenſure us of* weakeneſſe, *than* You *ſhould charge us with* Diſobedience: *Your* Requeſt *being no leſſe than a* command; *and* Your *acceptance ſufficient to give value to things of themſelves both meane and worthleſſe.*

Wherefore, according to our Duty, ſo willingly as the conſciouſneſſe of our ſlender performances would permit, we obey Your Order, *and doe now, although ſomewhat late, humbly offer theſe two plaine Sermons (for, who expects other in a* Faſt?) *at the footſtoole of* Your Tribunall, *as a laſting Monument of Our Gratitude for* Your *encouraging* Approbation *of, and ſolemne* Thankes *for our weake endeavours in the preaching of them.*

If in ſome places we have taken that juſt liberty which all others have done before us, we truſt it ſhall not be imputed; ſo long as in the

moſt

moſt materiall paſſages we have kept to the very words which at firſt wee uſed, ſo farre as was neceſſary; and have not wittingly ſwerved an haires bredth from the ſenſe and ſubſtance in the reſidue.

Wee have indeed pared off ſome Repetitions, which in ſpeaking had their uſe, the more to inculcate, and the better to ſet on the matter, but would not have been ſo gratefull in Writing, becauſe Readers account every thing too long that hath any thing too much. We have likewiſe contracted ſome expreſſions, which in diſcourſes of ſo much length, could hardly be ſo conciſe as wee deſired, Memory being not alwayes at hand to give birth to every Conception of our minds in ſuch formes as wee intended. And ſome few things we have added, where ſtraites of time, or defect of memory made ſome balkes in the firſt delivery.

What ever our performances be, we humbly leave them in Your hands, and under Your Honourable Protection, which we are bold to expect, becauſe they are by Your owne Act drawne

from us, and that in a time ſo queaſie and diſtempered as can hardly beare that food, or Phyſick which is needfull for it. Seldome doth a wiſe Reproofe, *a neceſſary* Exhortation, *or wholſome* Doctrine *meet with an* obedient Eare.

The God of Heaven ſteere all Your weighty conſultations by his own Counſell, to his owne Glory; cover You *ſtill under his own Wing, and make You the moſt* accompliſht, *beſt* united, *& maſt* ſucceſſefull *&* glorious houſe of Commons *that ever ſate in that* High Court; *but chiefly in the effectuall endeavouring of a further Sanction of, and ſtronger Guard about our true* Palladium, *the true* Religion, *already eſtabliſhed among us; in the perfecting of the* Reformation *of it; in the erecting, maintaining, protecting, and incouraging of an able, godly, faithfull, zealous, profitable, Preaching* * Miniſtery, *in every Pariſh Church and Chappell throughout England and Wales; and in the interceding to the Kings ſacred Majeſty for the ſetting up of a Faithfull, Iudicious, and Zealous* Magiſtracy, *where yet the ſame is wanting,*

* This was our joynt & earneſt ſuit to You, in Preaching; and we now again *beſeech* You to ſet your hearts and hands to this *work*, as *Benhail, Obadiah* and other *Princes* in *Iudah* did. 2 *Chr.* 17.7, 8, 9.

wanting, to bee ever at hand to back ſuch a Miniſtery: *without either of which, not only the* power of Godlineſſe *will ſoone degenerate into* formality, *and* zeale *into Lukewarmeneſſe*; *but*, Popery, Arminianiſme, Socinianiſme, Prophaneneſſe, Apoſtacy, *and* Atheiſme *it ſelfe will more and more croud in upon us, and prevaile againſt us, doe* You *all* You *can by all other meanes.*

And now, commending You to God and to the Word of his grace, which is able to build *You* up further, and to give You an inheritance among all them which bee ſanctified; *and theſe our Labours to his further bleſſing, whereby all may ſpeedily be brought under the line of his* Covenant, *which is our* ſafety; *that hee may* continue *with us, which is our* Glory; and wee with him, *which is* our happineſſe: *we reſt*, *Acts* 20. 32.

The Summe of both Sermons.

Yours, moſt devoted to the ſervice of Your Faith in all Dutie,

Cornelius Burges.
Stephen Marſhall.

The Preface uſed in Preaching, before the Text was read.

THat great *Apoſtle Saint* Paul, *when he had to doe with wiſe men, held it a point of wiſdome to paſſe by ſome things which he would not have wayved among meaner capacities. His practiſe ſhall be now my preſident.*

The *Preface*, ſhewing the reaſon of the choice of this Subject.

This honourable Aſſembly having deſigned me to beare ſo great a ſhare in this weightie Worke, I hold it my dutie to conſider, that, how weake and unworthy ſo ever I my ſelfe be, yet I am now to ſpeake to Wiſe Men, *who need not ſo much to be Catechiſed touching the* Nature, *as to be incited and quickned to the principall* Uſe *of a Religious* Faſt, *which conſiſteth not ſolely in ſuch drawing neere to God by extraordinary Prayer and Humiliation as may produce a totall divorce from our deereſt Luſts, but alſo (and that more principally) in a particular, formall, ſolemne, entire engaging and binding of our ſelves, by an indiſſoluble* Covenant, *to that God whoſe face and favour we ſeeke, and implore.*

And this I apprehend to be a ſubject more neceſſary, by how

The Preface. *much this dutie appeares to be leſſe heeded and regarded by the greater number of the choyceſt Chriſtians.*

For, as it too often falls out, even among the beſt, in participating that ſacred and dreadfull Ordinance of the Lords Supper, (*whereof alſo we are ſhortly to communicate*) *that moe labour more to* diſcerne, *and* feed *upon his bleſſed Body and Bloud, ſpiritually by faith, to make Chriſt their owne, (which muſt be done too) then actually, totally, and abſolutely (then) to devote, reſigne, and yeeld up themſelves unto him, in the act of receiving,* to be his ſervants: *So it doth not ſeldome happen in the exerciſe of holy* Faſting, *that not a few of that ſmall handfull which deſire to approach the preſence of God in trueth, are more converſant in ſearching, confeſsing, bewailing of ſinne, and in craving of mercy, (all of which are neceſſary duties) then in working up their hearts to that indiſpenſable pitch of heavenly reſolution, ſincerely to ſtrike through a religious and inviolable* Covenant *with their God. Whereas, without this, all their labour, will be utterly loſt, their expectations fruſtrate, they take the glorious Name of God in vaine, provoke the eyes of his Glory more againſt them, cauſing him infinitely to loath and abominate both their perſons, and ſervice; nor ſhall they ever by all their crying, and ſighing, no not by whole rivers of teares, be able to draw down an arme of Mercy from Heaven to come and ſave them.*

The more effectually therefore to provoke both my ſelfe and you at this time, to the due performance of this moſt neglected (but moſt neceſſary) dutie, I have thought fit, in a very plaine and familiar way ſutable to the nature of this exerciſe (which ought to be as ſerious, as ſolemne) to worke and chafe into all our hearts the ſtrength and ſpirit of that good Word of God, which you ſhall finde written for our inſtruction in

Jer.

Jer. 50. 5.

They ſhall aske the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, ſaying, *Come, and let us joyne our ſelves unto the Lord in an everlaſting Covenant* that *ſhall not be forgotten.*

WHich words are part of a Prophecie (terrible to *Babylon*, but comfortable to the Church) uttered, and penned by the Prophet *Ieremy*, about the fourth yeere both of the *Babyloniſh captivitie*, and of the tributary reigne of *Zedekiah*. The occaſion, this. The *Introduction* to the maine Diſcourſe.

The Prophet having laboured about thirtie yeers, to humble Judah by continually ringing in her eares the dolefull tydings of a ſore captivitie approaching, could not be beleeved. But, when once the quick and ſad ſenſe of their bondage under the Chaldean yoke had forced from them an acknowledgement of the truth of his prophecies, he found it as hard a taske to worke their hearts to any hope of deliverance. For, as it is a worke even inſuperable, to poſſeſſe a people ripe for deſtruction, that any evill is neere them, till the wrath of God breake in upon them and overwhelme them; ſo is it a buſineſſe of little leſſe difficultie to hold up the

Introduction. spirits even of Gods owne people, once cast under any great extreamitie, with any hope of rescue.

This was *Iudah's* case. Before the Babylonian had laid this yoke on their necks, God had plainly revealed, and often inculcated that it should lye upon them just 70.
Ier. 25. 11. 29. 10. yeeres and no longer, after which they should have libertie of returne to their owne Land againe. Howbeit, the weight of their misery, the absence of God, (who had *cast them out of his sight*) together with the insolence and crueltie of their proud oppressors, had throwne them downe so low in a disconsolate condition, that nothing which God could either now say or doe, was sufficient to raise up their hearts to any assurance of returne. The same strength which Lust hath to draw men from obedience, it will surely have afterwards to drive men from beleeving, in their greatest necessities of *living by faith.*

The maine beame which stucke in their eyes to hinder ther sight of deliverance promised, was, the greatnesse and invincible potency of the Chaldean Monarchy (then in her pride) and more especially the strength of *Babylon* the Queene and Mistresse of that puissant Empire. How could they hope to be delivered, when she that commanded the world detained them? *Shall*
Isay 49. 24. *the prey be taken from the Mightie, or the lawfull captive delivered?*

To cure them therefore of this desperate desponsion of minde, the Lord stirred up this Prophet to foretell the totall and finall subversion and ruine of *Babylon* and of that whole Monarchy; and further, to declare from God that the desolation thereof, should be the dissolution of the captivitie of *Iudah* in it. The better to assure them of all this, *Ieremiah* wrote the whole Prophecy against

againſt *Babylon* (contained in this Chapter and the next following) in a Book by it ſelf, which he ſent to *Babylon* by the hand of *Seraiah* (Lord Chamberlaine to *Zedekiah*, and now going in an Embaſſie from his Maſter to Great *Nebuchadnezzar*) with Command from the Prophet that, after the reading thereof to the captives, he ſhould *binde a ſtone unto it, and caſt it into the midſt of Euphrates*, with this ſaying pronounced over it, *Thus ſhall Babylon ſinke, and ſhall not riſe*, &c. *Introduction.* Jer. 51. 59.

But, to haſten to my Text, In the five firſt verſes of this Chapter, the Prophet ſummarily compriſeth the ſubſtance of his whole Prophecy againſt *Babylon*, declaring, 1. her *deſtruction*, 2. the *Meanes*, 3. the conſequent thereof to the people of God.

And firſt, he makes Proclamation, and an *Oiyes*! as it were, to all the world, to come and behold the Great Worke he was to doe againſt *Babylon* the chiefe Citie of the Empire, againſt *Bell* the chiefe Idol of that Citie, and againſt *Merodach* the glory both of that Citie and Empire; yea, though the King then reigning when God meant to deſtroy it, ſhould prove as potent as that great King, the firſt of that name, who for reſtoring the declining Empire to her ancient Splendor, and for tranſlating the Imperiall Seat from *Nineve* to *Babylon*, was by poſteritie worſhipped as a God, and transferred his name to all his ſucceſſors, as the name of *Pharaoh* to the Egyptian Kings, of *Benhadad* to the Syrian Monarchs, and of *Auguſtus* to the Romane Emperours. Although all theſe ſhould be joyned together to withſtand the downfall of that Monarchy, yet deſolation ſhould be brought over them all, they ſhould all be confounded and removed for ever, *Verſ.* 1, 2. and all to make way for the deliverance of the Church. 1.

Introduction. But what should be the *meanes* of such an unexpected destruction? This was to be done by an Army from the *North*, that is, by the *Medes* and *Persians*, both of which, but more especially the *Medes*, were situated towards the *North* from *Babylon*, and therefore ominous. That these were the men, appeares more fully by their description in the residue of this, and of the 51. Chapter. This Northern Army should be the confusion of *Babylon*, the confusion of *Babylon* should prove the restoring of the Church (*vers.* 3.) And the restoring of the Church should produce a *Covenant* with God.

Omne malum ab Aquilone.

3. For, behold, the issue and *consequent* of the ruine of *Babylon* was, the return of the captive Jews, from thence to Jerusalem, and a renewing Covenant with him that had shewed such mercy on them, *vers.* 4, 5.

For, *in those dayes, and in that time, saith the Lord, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Iudah together, going and weeping, they shall goe and seek the Lord their God. They shall aske the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come and let us joyne our selves to the Lord in an everlasting Covenant that shall not be forgotten.* This began to be fulfilled at the end of 70. yeeres determined, when the Empire was first over-run and subdued by *Cyrus* the *Persian*. For he made Proclamation of libertie to returne, in the first yeere of his reigne. And when they returned, this was their deportment; they went weeping; and, *to seeke the Lord their God.* They *goe*, not so much to repossesse their ancient patrimony and inheritance, and to grow rich in the world, as to seeke and finde the Lord their God, and that with a resolution to enter into *Covenant* with Him, and such a Covenant as should never *be forgotten*, but daily remembred and carefully performed.

2 Chron. 36. 22.

You

You now ſee the Context. Should I now divide the Text, I might ſhew you here *Introduction.*

- First, an *Act*, expreſſed by their induſtry, in ſetting upon a long and tedious journey to Zion. *They ſhall aske the way to Zion.* *Actus.* *Modus.*
- Secondly, the *manner* how they manage this journey, it is
  1. With all *intention of ſpirit*, they aske the way to Zion, *with their faces thitherward.*
  2. With fervent *charitie* towards, and mutuall *zeale* for each other, to quicken and inflame one another to the ſame work, *ſaying, Come.*
- Thirdly, the end of their journey, which, with ſo much intention of ſpirit and inflamed charitie, calling and crying to one another in ſuch a manner, they ſet upon; all was for this: *Let us joyne our ſelves to the Lord in an everlaſting Covenant* that *ſhall not be forgotten.* *Finis.*

I might eaſily alſo caſt out theſe generals of the Text into many leſſer branches: but it is not now a time to trifle, or to play with a Text. Yea, I ſhall not diſtinctly proſecute all the parts already laid out, but (as the dutie of this day requireth) inſiſt rather upon that which is the maine, and bring in the other as ſubordinate thereunto, by occaſion afterwards, in explication of the principall point. For we ſee troopes in the Text bound for *Zion*; and, ſo haſty *thitherward*, that they *ſalute not any man by the way*, nor ſo much as looke aſide any way: they goe *with their faces thitherward:* all the ſtay they make, is but to call others along with them, and amongſt theſe us, ſaying, *Come.* And, what is the buſineſſe; the end of all this haſt? Nothing but this, *Let us joyne our ſelves*

unto

unto the Lord in an everlasting Covenant, &c. This, however it were last in execution, yet was it first in their intention, in the undertaking of this journey, and therefore now must be principally insisted upon.

You see here a people loosed from the Babylonish captivitie, and returning to *Zion*: and, in their returne to have this in their hearts, in their mouthes, and in their endeavours, namely, upon the receipt of this mercy, to make speed to their God, to enter into a new Contract and solemne Covenant with him. So that now the chiefe, and only point of instruction which I shall recommend to, and presse upon you, and mine own heart with you, is plainly this, that

The maine *Observation* or *Doctrine.*

When God vouchsafes any deliverance to his Church, especially from Babylon, then is it most seasonable and most necessary to close with God by a more solemne, strict, and inviolable Covenant to be his, and only his for ever.

In prosecuting this point (wherein I resolve to be plaine, and in earnest) I shall first shew you the ὅτι of it, *that it is so.* Next, the καθότι, if you will, *how and in what manner* this must be done. Thirdly, the διότι, the *grounds* and reasons of it: and so proceed to the *Application.*

1. Ὅτι. *quod sit.* That it is so.

For the first, the ὅτι, that it is so, this will appeare,
1. More generally, upon receipt of any deliverance.
2. More specially, upon any deliverance from *Babylon* above all other.

Proved. 1. More generally.

1. In generall, that this use must be made of any deliverance, appeares both by precept, and example in holy Scripture. We shall carry them along together.

Exod. 19. 5. &c.

In *Deut.* 29. you shall finde *Moses* requiring the people to enter into a *speciall Covenant* with God, *beside the solemne Covenant which he made with them* (*and they with him*

him) in Horeb. To induce them thereunto, *Moſes* refreſheth their memory with the repetition or repreſentation of the many deliverances God had given unto them, out of *Egypt*, and in the wilderneſſe by the ſpace of fortie yeeres, together with the wonders and miracles which he daily wrought for them. And in the ſeventh *ver.* he tels them, that *when ye came into this place* (that is, into *the Land of Moab*) *Sihon the King of Heſhbon, and Og the King of Baſhan, came out againſt us unto battell, and we ſmote them*, &c. What then? Here is deliverance upon deliverance, and the inference is, *Keep therefore the words of this Covenant, and doe them*, verſ. 9. But, that is the Covenant on Gods part, you will ſay? True, but that is not all. He therefore preſſeth them to an actuall perſonall Covenant on their parts, and that upon conſideration of ſo many deliverances. This was his maine buſineſſe with them at the Lords own command. Therefore in *verſ.* 10. he thus beſpeaks them, *Ye ſtand this day all of you before the Lord your God, your Captaines of your tribes, your Elders, and your Officers, with all the men of Iſrael, your little ones, your wives, and thy ſtranger that is in thy Campe, from the hewer of thy wood to the drawer of thy water, That thou ſhouldſt enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day.* And in *verſ.* 14. he addeth. *Neither with you only doe I make this Covenant, and this oath, but with him that ſtandeth here with us this day before the Lord our God, and alſo with him that is not here with us this day.* Thus you ſee a Covenant required, ſtrickn, and ratified by ſolemne Oath of God and his people mutually to one another: they binde themſelves by ſolemne Oath to him, as he by Oath had bound himſelfe to them. Thus then it was in the time of *Moſes*, No eminent

1. *That it is ſo*, in the generall.

The firſt ſolemne Covenant which they paſſed into, was after their deliverance out of Egypt. *Verſ.* 1.

A ſecond Covenant, about fortie yeeres after the firſt, when they came neere to Canaan and ſhortly after were to enter into it.

1. *That it is so*, in the generall.

deliverance went before, but a solemne Covenant followed after*. And, To sweare a Covenant, is no new device, no humane invention, nor arbitrary Action.

I will give you but one instance more (among many) of this kinde, and it is that of *Asa*, that good and religious King of *Iudah*. When *Zerah* the Ethiopian infested his kingdome with an huge army, even 1000000, and 300 Chariots, 2 *Chron.* 14. *Asa* falls to praying, God heard him; they joyned battell, *Asa* obtained the victory, and *carryed away very much spoile*. What was the issue? Another *Covenant*.

For, in *Chap.* 15. you shall finde that, presently upon this, God addresseth a Prophet to *Asa*, (*Azariah* the sonne of *Oded*) to tell him and the people, *The Lord is with you while ye be with him*. And, to encourage them to close with God, he addes, in *vers.* 7. *Be ye strong therefore, and let not your hands be weake: for your worke shall be rewarded*. They must not only worke for God, but be *strong* to his worke; and that they might be so, there was no way like to that of entring into a *Covenant* with him. For, so *Asa* understood it, as appeares by the next words, where it is said, *Asa, when he heard these words, tooke courage*; and, although he had before done much in purging the Cities of Judah of Idolatry, and Idols, of high places, Images, and groves, yet now he goes on to a more thorough reformation, and *put away* the remainder of *abominable Idols out of all the Land of Iudah and Benjamin and out of the Cities which he had taken from Mount Ephraim, and renewed the Altar of the Lord*; for ever where Idols goe up, Gods Altars goe downe, therefore he pulleth downe the one, and setteth up the other.

And not this alone, but he offered unto the Lord a great *sacrifice*, and both himselfe and his people *entred*

* As *Moses* drew the people into a *Covenant* before their entrance into Canaan; so did *Iosua* also, after they were possessed of it, *Iosh.* 24. 25, 26. So did *Iehoiada*, upon the deliverance of Iudah from the tyranny of that bloudy monster *Athaliah*, 2 *King.* 11. 17.

2 *Chron.* 14.

into

into a Covenant to ſeeke the Lord God of their fathers, with all their heart, and with all their ſoule, that whoſoever would not ſeeke the Lord God of Iſrael, ſhould be put to death, whether ſmall or great, whether man or woman; and they ſware unto the Lord with a loud voyce, and with ſhouting, and with trumpets, and with Cornets. And all this, immediately upon the deliverance and victory which he had obtained: for, in *verſ.* 11. it is ſaid expreſſely, that *they offered unto the Lord, the ſame time* (or, *in that very day*) *of the ſpoile which they had brought, 700. Oxen, and 7000. Sheepe*; meaning of thoſe, which they had carryed away from the Ethiopians that came out to battaile againſt them.

So that now you ſee another ſolemne *Covenant* entred into, not by *Aſa* alone, but by all the people of God, a Covenant ſolemnized in publique by *Sacrifice*, by *Oath*, and under the higheſt penaltie of *death* it ſelfe to all that ſhould not obſerve it.

In purſuit of which Covenant, ſee what he preſently did. He ſpared not his owne Mother that regarded it not. For, when he perceived that, notwithſtanding this Covenant, the Queene his Mother, *Maacha*, would needs retaine her puppet Gods ſtill, and (amongſt the reſt) one abominable Idol, in a grove, ſo obſcene as it is not fit to be named: (*Abulenſis*[a] obſerveth that it was *Priapus*, and conjectureth thence, that ſhe was not only a groſſe Idolatreſſe, but an abominable ſtrumpet: [b] for, ordinarily, Idolatry and adultery, ſpirituall and bodily fornication goe together[c]) It is ſaid, that *he removed her from being Queene, becauſe ſhe had made an Idol in a grove, and Aſa cut down her Idol, and ſtampt it, and burnt it at the brooke Kidron, verſ.* 16. Which paſſage is expreſt with an emphaſis, in 1 *King.* 15. 11. *Alſo Maacha his Mother, even Her, he removed from being Queene.* Although a

1. *That it is ſo*, in the generall.

[a] *In* 3. *Reg.* 15. *qu.* 11. The Vulgar hath it in the Text, *ne eſſet Princeps in Sacris Priapi.*

[b] *Lyra* is peremptory for this, *ibid.*

[c] *Hom.* againſt peril of Idol. par. 3. *Rom.* 1. 21, 22, 23, 24, &c. *Wiſd.* 14. 23, &c. to verſ. 28. *Minut. Felix in octavio Athan.* orat. cont. *Idol. Tertull.* in Apolog. cap. 15. *B. Hall* Contempl. in *Aſa. Lorinus* in *Levit.* 18. p. 536. *Idem* in *Num.* 16. pag. 572. *Aliqs complures.*

1. *That it is so.*

Queene, although a *Mother**, yet *even her* he depoſed from her dignitie.

* Some ſuppoſe her to have been his Grand-mother, others ſay ſhe was his own Mother, of the ſame name with his Grandmother, which is more probable, becauſe Scripture ſtiles her ſo.

This he did, and this he muſt doe, not only by reaſon of that voluntary Covenant into which he had entred, but by vertue of the ſpeciall Command of God himſelfe, in what ever relation ſhe had ſtood unto him. Yea, in *Deut.* 13. 6. the Law was more ſtrict, for though ſhe had been neerer than a Mother, even the *wife of his boſome*, yet if ſhe were an Idolater, and ſhould *entiſe him ſecretly, ſaying, Let us goe and ſerve other Gods*, ſhe muſt have *been put to death*, and *his own hand muſt have been firſt upon her*, verſ. 9.

You now ſee the point proved in the generall, that thus it is with Gods people; upon any notable deliverance*, they enter anew into *ſolemne* and ſtrict *Covenant* with God.

* Yea, ſometimes upon conſideration of Gods Judgements felt, or feared. 2 *Chro.* 29. 10. 2 *Chro.* 34. 31, 32.

2. In ſpeciall.

2. But more eſpecially ought this to be the care of the Church, when God gives her deliverance out of *Babylon*, out of that ſervitude and bondage which of all other was moſt heavy, and lay longeſt on her. See this in ſome inſtances, both on Gods part ayming at this in giving deliverance, and on his peoples part performing this after deliverance from *Babylon*.

On Gods part, firſt. This was foreſhewed under the ſimilitude of the basket of *good figs*, Jer. 24. 5. There it is ſaid by *the Lord, the God of Iſrael, Like theſe good figs, ſo will I acknowledge them that are carryed away Captive of Iudah, whom I have ſent out of this place into the Land of the Chaldeans for their good: for I will ſet mine eyes upon them for good, and I will bring them againe to this Land*, &c. And, in the ſeventh verſe it followeth, *I will give them an heart to know me that I am the Lord, and I will be their God: for they ſhall retnrne unto me with their whole heart.* He will give

give them an heart to *know* him, to *returne*, and become his *people*, which cannot be without a *Covenant*. Againe That this is that which Gods heart is exceedingly ſet upon, and full of, namely, that he never meant to bring his people backe from *Babylon*, but upon this very condition (albeit it was a great while ere it was done, and therefore they thrived accordingly, as we ſhall ſhew anon) will yet further appeare by many other paſſages of the Prophecy of *Ieremy*, to paſſe by ſundry other Prophecies uttered by *Iſaiah*, *Micah*, and others.

1. *That it is ſo*, in ſpeciall.

In *Ier.* 30. 18. we ſhall finde a Prophecy, that this ſhould be done, (and I ſhall ſhew, by and by, that it was afterwards performed) *Behold*, ſaith the Lord, *I will bring againe the captivitie of Iacobs tents, and have mercy on his dwelling places*, &c. and, in verſ. 21. *I will cauſe him to draw neere, and he ſhall approach unto me*; and then, as one aſſured of it, and admiring at it, he preſently adds; *for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me, ſaith the Lord?* That is, both Governour and people, all of them ſhould binde and engage themſelves, (not their outward man alone, but even their very heart and ſoule alſo) by ſolemne Covenant to be the Lords. That this was the meaning, is cleare by the next verſe. *Ye ſhall be my people, and I will be your God.* For it was ſuch an *engaging of their hearts*, as that *one ſhould ſay, I am the Lords*; *and another ſhall call himſelfe by the name of Iacob: and another ſhall ſubſcribe with his hand unto the Lord, and ſirname himſelfe by the name of Iſrael*, Iſa. 44. 5. *Verſ.* 31, &c.

So againe, in *Ier.* 31. the Lord having firſt promiſed to bring back the captivitie, he ſubjoynes; *Behold, the dayes come, ſaith the Lord, that I will make a new Covenant with the houſe of Iſrael, and with the houſe of Iudah: not according to the Covenant which I made with their fathers,*

1. *That it is ſo,* in ſpeciall.

in the day that I tooke him out of the Land of Egypt, which my Covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, ſaith the Lord. But this ſhall be the Covenant that I will make with the houſe of Iſrael; After thoſe dayes, ſaith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they ſhall be my people. Here is a Covenant, God begins the work, but his people follow. They imbrace the Covenant, and joyne themſelves by mutuall Covenant to him. He puts his Law into their hearts, for this very purpoſe.

Once more. In *Ier.* 32. 37. there is a promiſe that God would gather his people out of all countries whither he had caſt them in his wrath, and that he would bring them back to their own place, and cauſe them to dwell ſafely. He preſently addes this as the product of that mercy; *they ſhall be my people, and I will be their God, and I will give them one heart, and one way that they may feare me for ever,* &c. *I will make an everlaſting Covenant with them, that I will not turne away from them to do them good, but I will put my feare in their hearts that they ſhall not depart from me:* Which words go no leſſe than a ſolemn Covenant mutually made and ſtrucken betweene God and his people.

Thus then you ſee, many plaine and pregnant places of Scripture ſhew, that the maine thing God on his part aymed at, and expected from his people in delivering them from *Babylon*, was, the firme and ſolemne tying and engaging of themſelves by a formall and effectuall Covenant to him, and the *remembring* and keeping of it better than formerly they had done.

But, ſecondly, all theſe were but prophecies ſhewing what God foreſhewed ſhould be. Will you therefore ſee the thing acted, and all theſe promiſes fulfilled? True

it

it is indeed that the people did not on their parts performe this, they entred not into ſuch a ſolemne Covenant, ſo ſoone as deliverance was by *Cyrus* proclaimed; and they ſped accordingly. *Zorobbabel* went indeed before, in the firſt yeere of *Cyrus*, and laid the foundation of the Lords Houſe: but we read of no Covenant then made. Therefore, the work was ſtayed, and the building not finiſhed in an 100 yeeres after, ſay the beſt Chronologers. 1. *That it is ſo*, in ſpeciall.

Then comes *Ezra*, and makes ſome reformation of manners; and not only ſo, but ſome Covenant he and the people entred into, *Ezra* 10. But that was but in a particular caſe (and it would be thought a ſtrange one, to this age eſpecially, ſhould it now be preſſed;) there were many that had treſpaſſed againſt their God by taking ſtrange wives of the people of the Land (that worſhipped not the ſame God.) Such therefore, as now were duely touched with the ſenſe of this ſinne, deſire *Ezra* that a ſolemne *Covenant* might now be made with God, *to put away all* ſuch *wives, and ſuch as were borne of them*, Verſ. 3. Now, in the fifth verſe, we ſhall finde this executed. For, *Ezra aroſe, and made the chiefe Prieſts, the Levites, and all Iſrael to ſweare that they ſhould do according to this word, and they ſware.*

This was ſomewhat, but not enough: a partiall Covenant, and ſuch as came ſhort of that intended in my Text. You ſhall ſee it more throughly performed afterwards, in *Nehemiahs* time. For, after *Ezra*, came *Nehemiah*, and he makes a more thorough Reformation; not of mens manners only, but even of Religion alſo. He ſet up the Ordinances of God in their puritie, and tooke care in particular for the preaching of the Word. After all this, he and all the people entred into a ſolemne

1. *That it is ſo*, in ſpeciall.

lemne Covenant, and that at the time of a publique Faſt? And this brings it home to the buſineſſe we are now about. For, as they entred into Covenant upon receipt of ſuch a deliverance, ſo they did it at the time of a ſolemne Faſt. This will appeare throughout the whole ninth Chapter of *Nehemiah*, where it is firſt ſaid, that *the Children of Iſrael were aſſembled with faſting, and with ſack-cloath, and with earth upon them: they ſeparated themſelves from ſtrangers, they ſtood and confeſſed their ſinnes, and the iniquities of their fathers.* They juſtified God in all his proceedings againſt them, and in all the evils he had brought upon them. They acknowledged that neither they, their Princes, people, or fathers had kept the Law; they had not ſerved God in that Kingdome he had beſtowed upon them. *Behold*, ſay they, *verſ.* 36. *We are ſervants this day, and for the Land that thou gaveſt unto our fathers, to eate the fruit thereof, and the good thereof, behold we are ſervants in it, And it yeeldeth much encreaſe unto the Kings whom thou haſt ſet over us, becauſe of our ſinnes: alſo they have dominion over our bodies, and over our cattell at their pleaſure, and we are in great diſtreſſe. And becauſe of all this, we make a ſure Covenant*, in the laſt verſe) *and write it, and our Princes, Levites, and Prieſts ſeale unto it.*

Now here is the full accompliſhment of that you have in my Text. What in the Text is ſet down by way of Prophecy, you here ſee acted in the Hiſtory. In *Nehemiahs* time, they come home unto it. And if you look into the tenth Chapter you ſhall ſee who ſeaſled this Covenant: firſt, the Princes, the Officers, the Magiſtrates of the Kingdome, the *Parliament men*, if you will ſo call them; and then the reſt of the people. And what is the ſubſtance of their Covenant? They *entred into a curſe, and*

and into an Oath, to walke in Gods Law, which was given by Moſes the ſervant of God, and to obſerve and do all the Commandements of the Lord their God, and his Iudgements, and Statutes, verſ. 29. 2. *How it is ſo.*

Here then is their Covenant: you ſee alſo with what ſolemnitie it was made and ratified; by *ſubſcribing* of *hands*, and ſetting to of their *Seales*, by an *Oath*, and by a *curſe*; binding themſelves by all the moſt ſolemne and ſtrongeſt bonds that poſſibly they could; and all this in Publique, and at a *Publique Faſt*. So that now the point is cleare, *That it is ſo*, and that the practiſe of Gods people hath ever been, upon any great deliverance, eſpecially from *Babylon*, to enter into ſolemne Covenant with the Lord.

Come we to the ſecond branch propounded, which is the Καθότι, ſhewing, *in what manner* this Covenant muſt be made, and *how* men are to joyne themſelves to the Lord in this action. 2. Καθότι, *Quomodo ſit. How this is to be* done.

This I ſhall demonſtrate out of the bowels of the Text it ſelf: for therein may you ſee ſomewhat required, 1. By way of *diſpoſition* or *preparation* to it. 2. In reſpect of the *ſubſtance* of it. 3. In regard of the *properties* belonging to it. Theſe being opened, I ſhall give you a full view of this Text, and performe my promiſe before made unto you. In a threefold reſpect.

The firſt thing to be unfolded is, the *diſpoſition* or *preparation* to the *Covenant*; and this appeares in two things, 1. In ſeeking ſeriouſly the face of God, *They ſhall aske the way to Zion.* 2. In the manner of their addreſſe unto him, *with their faces thitherward*, ſaying, *Come.* 1. Of the *diſpoſition* requiſite to ſtrike a Covenant with God. Whereunto is required 1. *The asking the way to Zion.*

1. The firſt thing requiſite to *diſpoſe*, qualifie, and prepare men to ſtrike a Covenant with God, is a ſerious and humble ſeeking of the face of God. *They ſhall aske*

2. *How this is to be done.*

the way to Zion. And there first a word of the *place* toward which they were bound; secondly, of their contending and repaire to it, under that expression of *asking the way* thither.

The *place*, was *Zion*, where first (though it be but a Criticisme, it is yet not unnecessary to be taken notice of, because the word is often pronounced, and written amisse, which may cause ambiguity touching the place) you must put a difference between *Sihon* or *Sion*, and *Zion*: (for these were two different places, and are written in the originall with two different Letters, the former with ס the other with צ) you must not here understand this, of the former, namely, of *Mount Sihon*, which is all one with *Hermon*, situate in the utmost confines of Israel North-East-ward, neere unto Jordan, (*Deut.* 4. 48.) but conceive it to be meant of ציון or *Zion* in Hierusalem, which was once the strongehold of the Jebusites, and held out longer unsubdued than any Peece belonging to that people. For, when Israel under the Conduct of *Iosua* had conquered *Iebus*, after called *Hierusalem*, yet could they not winne *Zion* in it. *Zion* was a strong Castle or Fort, erected upon a rocky mount, toward the South-west part of the Citie, overlooking all the rest; and that the Jebusites, having aboundantly fortified and victualled it, still held, all the dayes of *Iosua*, and long after, albeit the Israelites possessed the rest of the Citie, *Iosh.* 15. 63. But afterwards when *David came* against it, even that *strong hold* (which the Jebusites thought to be so invincible, that, in scorne of him and his siege, they set up only a few blind & lame people on the walles to defend it) he conquered and called it *the Citie of David*, because after he had wonne it, himself dwelt in it, 2 *Sam.* 5. 7. This, for the Topography.

Then,

Then, you muſt know further, that, by *Zion* is ſometimes meant the whole city of *Hieruſalem*, by a *Synechdoche*; ſometimes it was taken for the place of Gods Worſhip in the holy city, or rather with reference to his Worſhip and preſence there: for that City being the Capitall City of the Kingdome, where Thrones were ſet for Iudgement, was alſo the ſpeciall place which God choſe to place his name in: there, were the Altars placed for Gods worſhip, and *thither the Tribes went up to worſhip*, becauſe there God pleaſed to manifeſt his more ſpeciall preſence, and to *command the bleſsing for evermore*. Thither therefore theſe returning Captives repained; even unto *Zion*, the *Watch Towre*, as S. *Hierome* interprets it, whence God in ſpeciall manner watched over his people for Good: there they ſeek his face, and enquire of him, before they preſume to enter Covenant with him. 2. *How this is to be done.*

Now their addreſſe to this place, is ſet forth in this Text, by *asking the way* to Zion. The word שְׁאֵלָה* though it ſometimes import the demanding of a thing which is a point of Juſtice or equity to give, (as Gen. 34. 14.) yet is it uſually applyed to note the ſeeking of ſome thing by humble prayers and intreaties: ſo as it is not ſeldome put for prayer it ſelfe, 2 *Chro*: 20. 4. and, ſometimes for an earneſt & humble enquiry after ſome thing we know not, (*Num*: 27. 21. *Deut*: 13. 14.) that we may be directed aright, and purſue the direction with effect: So here, They *aske the way to Zion*, and that of God, not onely *to ſeek of him a right way for them* by faſting and prayer, *Ezra* 8. 21. but, as reſolving that ſomewhat ſhould be done, that they would walke in it, and *appeare before God in Zion*: for, ſo much is intended here as is expreſſed more fully elſewhere, viz. in *Iſay* 2. *verſe* 2, 3. *Mic.* 4. 1, 2. where they not onely call

* *From* שָׁאַל *to beſeech or pray.*

2. *How this is to be done.*

on each other to undertake, but they also performe the journey, *going up to the mountaine of the Lord.* So the Prophet *Zachary*, the inhabitants of one *City shall goe to another, saying, Let us goe speedily to pray before the Lord, and to seeke the Lord of Hosts, I will goe also: yea, many people and strange nations shall come to seeke the Lord of Hosts in Hierusalem, and to pray before the Lord.* Zach. 8. 21. 22. And how goe they? not sleightly, carelessely, proudly, but in all humility, yea (as in the verse before my Text) even with *weeping*, they shall seeke the Lord their God with deepe humiliation and godly sorrow for all those sinnes whereby they had formerly broken his Covenant, and for which he had entred upon the forfeiture, and laid those heavy afflictions upon their Loines. *Going, and weeping, they shall goe to seeke their God* in *Zion.* The very same thing was foretold before (to shew the necessity of the duty) touching Israel. *Ier.* 31. 9. *They shall come with weeping, and with suplications will I lead them.* So then, this is the first thing in this worke to dispose and prepare men for the Covenant; namely, to *aske the way* to *Zion*, by a serious, humble, affectionate inquiring and seeking after God in his Ordinances, even with many prayers and teares, that he would be pleased to accept them.

2. In regard of the *manner.*

Secondly, the *manner* of their addresse is as necessary as the former. It is not every *manner* that will serve the turne. It must be done with all *intention* of spirit in regard of themselves, and with *fervent Charity* towards others. For, they must aske the way to Zion *with their faces thitherward, saying Come.*

* That is, 1. With *intention* of Spirit.

Their *intention and fervency of spirit* wherewith they set upon this worke, is set forth under that Hebraisme of asking the way to Zion *with their faces thitherward.* This phrase

phrase is usually an expression of the greatest intention, fervency, and contention of mind that can be, in the pursuit of any businesse on foote, or of any way wherein a man is going. Such a phrase you have in *Luke* 9. 51. where it is said of Christ, *that he stedfastly set his face to goe to Hierusalem*, or, *as if he would goe to Hierusalem*: for which cause the Samaritanes *would not receive him*, ver. 53. that is, they would not entertayne him with any respect, because, that *stedfast setting of his face* towards Hierusalem* manifested, by his very countenance and aspect, that, where ever his body was, his heart was at Hierusalem (which the Samaritanes could not brooke) and that nothing in the world could take him off from that journey, or, so farre prevaile with him, as to make him linger, or loyter upon the way; no entreaties, feare, shame, nor any thing could stay him, but, *obstinata et imperterritamente locum petiit*, as it is exprest by *Bede*. He was no way afraid, or ashamed to be seene and knowne whither he was bound, and what he was going about.

2. *How this is to be done.*

* οὐκ ἔτι ὧδε κἀκεῖ ἀπερχόμενος, καὶ περιοδεύων κώμας καὶ πόλεις.

He will no longer turne aside hither and thither, and goe about their villages and Cities. *Tit. Bost.* in Luc. 9.

When therefore it is here said, they shall aske the way to Zion *with their faces thitherward*, the thing meant thereby, is, that they shall set upon this work with their whole heart, with their whole man, without any feare, or being ashamed, or unwilling to owne the businesse: but, they shall doe it thoroughly and affectionately without wavering, lingring, halting: they shall doe it boldly, presently, openly, indefatigably and continually. In a word, whatsoever can be sayd, or thought upon, to set forth the utmost intention of a mans Spirit in any worke that his heart is most set upon, and that he would lay out his life and all he hath upon, for the accomplishment of it; that was the resolution, & care of these people, & must be ours: this is to aske the way to Zion *with*

2. *How this is to be done.*

our faces thitherward. And without this, no entring into Covenant with God. This is, for substance no other (though otherwise expressed) than that of the people in *Asa* his time, when they sware the Covenant before mentioned, 2 *Chron.* 15. where it is said, they did it *with all their heart, and with all their soule*, and expreſt it by the *loudnesse* of their *voyces*, and *with shoutings, &c: rejoycing at the Oath, because they had sworne with all their hearts, and sought him with their whole desire*, vers. 15. Men that will stand disputing, consulting with flesh and bloud, and casting about how the entring into such a Covenant may consist with their profits, honours, lusts, designes, relations, &c. are no fit *Covenanters* for God. *His people shall be willing*, *Psal.* 110. 3. their heart, minde, spirit, body, countenance, all, shall professe, and proclaime this to the whole world, that they are for God, for a *Covenant*, for putting themselves into the strongest bonds that can possibly be thought on to bind them hand and foot, soule and body to the Lord for ever.

2. With charitie towards others.

2. Nor is this all. For, the men in my Text, content not themselves to be thus earnestly addicted to the worke in their own particulars; but, (as one stick kindles another) they desire to kindle the same flame of affection in others also, and mutually to blow up the coales in one another, *saying, Come.*

This notes the *fervency* of their *Charitie* towards others also. For, 'tis not here brought in as a formalitie, or complement, but as the evidence of a strong desire to draw as many others as they can to the same journey, and (if it be possible) to keep the same pace with them, as being most unwilling to leave any behind them. This indeed is true Love, unfained Charitie, to draw all we

can

can along with us unto God. True Converts, when once they returne themſelves, *they cauſe others to returne* alſo. And this was often prophecyed as a thing which ſhould certainly be: Witneſſe all thoſe places in *Iſay* 2. *Mic.* 4. and *Zach.* 8. before quoted. So then all theſe things are requiſite, and *previous* to the Act of Covenanting with God. There muſt be a ſeeking to God with true humiliation, a ſeeking of him with all intention of ſpirit, and with all manifeſtations of a reſolution not to be terrified from, daunted at, or aſhamed of the worke: yea, with fervent Charitie to draw others into the ſame Covenant alſo. Thus much for the diſpoſition previous to the Covenant. 2. *How this is to be done.*

2. The next thing conſiderable in the Text is, the *Subſtance* of the Covenant it ſelf. *Let us joyne our ſelves to the Lord, in a Covenant.* 2. The *Subſtance* of the Covenant.

Two things here muſt be opened; the *matter*, and the *forme* of this ſolemne action. Both in reſpect,

1. The matter of this Act is ſet forth under this expreſſion, *Let us joyne our ſelves to the Lord.* The original word נִלְוֶה (from לוה) is very emphatical; ſo as that word, being explained, will ſufficiently ſet out before you the nature of the Covenant here intended. Some Tranſlators render it, *Let us glue our ſelves unto the Lord*; which imports a conjunction ſo neere, as nothing can come between, and ſo firme, as nothing can diſſolve. But more particularly, the verb here uſed is in Scripture applyed to a double ſenſe, or to denote two things: both of which being ſet together, will fully diſcover what it is to be *joyned to the Lord in Covenant.* 1. Of the *matter.*

Firſt, it ſignifyeth the binding of a mans ſelf to the Uſurer, of whom he hath borrowed money, to pay backe both principall and intereſt. So it is uſed in *Nehem.*

2. *How this is to be done.*

Nehem. 5. 4. where the people complaine, *We have borrowed money* *, *for the Kings tribute, and that upon our Lands and Vineyards.* That is, they had engaged both Lands and Vineyards for securitie of the money borrowed, that the Usurer should enter upon all, in case they failed of payment at the day. So that, as men, to make sure, will have a *Statute Staple*, or *recognisance in the nature of a Statute Staple*, acknowledged, whereby a mans person, goods, lands, and all, are bound for the securitie of the Creditor, that he shall have both principall and interest at the day agreed upon (and here that of *Solomon* proves too true, *The borrower is servant to the lender*: for, he hath nothing left to his own dispose; if he would sell any Land, settle any joyncture, there is a *Statute* upon it, he can dispose of nothing till that be taken off;) so it is in the case of any man joyning himself to the Lord by Covenant, he must even bind himself to God as firmely, as fully, as the poore borrower, who for his necessitie takes up money, binds himself to the Usurer. If God lend him any mercy, any blessing, he binds himself to restore not only the principall (the blessing it self) when God shall call for it; but even the interest too; I meane, all possible homage, service, and honour which becomes those who have received so great a benefit.

This is more than implyed in that parable of our Saviour touching the talents dispensed, *Matth.* 25. 27. for even to him who had received but one talent, was it said, *Thou oughtest to have put my money to the Exchangers, that at my coming I might have received mine own with usury.* God will have his returne, some interest, for every mercy; and expects a *Statute Staple*, that is, a Covenant, for his better securitie. God will have him bound, soul, body,

* לוים כסף

body, eſtate, life and all; ſo as all he is, and hath, ſhall be forfeited, if he do not keep touch, and make payment according to agreement and Covenant made between them. This is the firſt uſe of the word, *nilvu.* 2. *How this is to be done.*

Secondly, there is yet more in it. For, though it be true that the obligation of a borrower to the uſurer be as ſtrong as bonds and Statutes can make it; yet, there is not ſuch an entire, neere, firme, and laſting tye of the borrower to the Lender, nor ſuch a thorough intereſt in the whole eſtate of the Uſurer, as there is of him that is in Covenant with God. The Uſurer, though he bind the poor borrower faſt to him, yet he keeps him at diſtance, not giving him intereſt in, or uſe of any other part of his eſtate, but only of the ſumme borrowed. But now this *joyning of our ſelves to the Lord*, is ſuch, as is made by *marriage*; and gives intereſt in all that the Lord is, and hath, and admits us to the participation of all the moſt intimate, neereſt, choyſeſt expreſſions of the deereſt Love of God, which is or can be found between the husband and the wife, who are *joyned* together by the bond of marriage, and made one fleſh.

So the word is uſed, *Gen.* 29. 34 where *Leah*, being delivered of her third ſonne, *Levi*, thus ſaith to the women about her, *Now this time will my husband be joyned* unto me, becauſe I have born him three ſonnes.* That is, now ſhall my husband be more arctly united to me in all love, and in all demonſtrations of it, and that in the moſt free, full, and intimate way of expreſſion that poſſibly can paſſe between thoſe who are coupled together in ſo neere a relation. ילוה אישי אלי

So then, lay both theſe together, and you have a cleare view of this *joyning of our ſelves to the Lord* by Covenant. He that enters into Covenant with God, doth

2. *How this is to be done.*

not only bind himself, as the needy *borrower* to the Covetous *Vsurer*, for a *time*; but, as the *wife* to the *husband*, to be *wholly his for ever*, without any reservation, limitation, or termination, till death dissolve the bond. As the wife hath interest in the goods, estate, and person of the husband; and all that he hath is hers: so by this *joyning of our selves to the Lord*, He becomes ours, as well as we become his, and both are mutually conjoyned to each other by an indissoluble bond for ever. All the power, wisdome, goodnesse, mercy, grace, glory, that the Great God hath to communicate to the creature, is now assured and made over to every soule that thus engageth himself unto him. And on the other side, all the wit, strength, industry, wealth, honour, friends, life, and all that this man hath, he makes over, and resignes up actually, totally, absolutely, and for ever unto the Lord, to serve and honour him withall; and that with all his heart, and with his whole desire; to have nothing, to do nothing, to be nothing but for the Lord, though all the world be against him for it. This I take to be the full latitude of the *Covenant*, for the *Matter* of it.

2. In regard of the *forme.*

2. Touching the *forme* of this Act of *joyning our selves to the Lord*, it is expressed in the word ברית, the *Covenant*. A Covenant is nothing else but an agreement or bargaine between two or moe persons, and ratified (ordinarily) by some externall solemnitie, or rites that may testifie and declare the agreement, and ratifie it, whereby it becomes unalterable. Therefore it is, that among the varietie of ratifications of Covenants mentioned in Scripture, still there is somewhat of outward solemnitie reported to have been used at the making of them, to strike the bargaine thorough.

Some-

Sometimes they were made by *Sacrifice*, *Pſal.* 50. 5. ſometimes by *Oath*, *Deut.* 29. ſometimes by an *Oath* and a *curſe*, *Neh.* 10. 29. ſometimes by *ſubſcription* of their hands, ſometimes by *ſealing* it with their ſeales alſo: Sometimes by all theſe, and by what ever elſe might moſt firmely & inviolable knit men unto God. And as it was then, ſo muſt it be ſtill. To ſtrike a Covenant, is not, in a private or publique prayer only, to goe to God and ſay, *Lord I will be thine, I here enter into a Covenant with thee, be thou a witneſſe of it*, &c. but it is, to ſtand and make it *publiquely* before the Lord, by ſome ſpeciall *ſolemnitie* that may *witneſſe* it to all the world, as *Ioſiah**, *Aſa*, and all the Godly ever did; (even as in in entring into bonds, or as in ſolemnizing of matrimony, men uſe to doe) Whether by the Sacrament of the *Lords Supper*, by *faſting*, or by ought elſe, whereby they may become ſo firmely and arctly joyned to the Lord, that they may not only be no longer *ſui juris*, to depart away from the Living God; but, not ſo much as to ſit looſe from God, or to ſtand in any termes of indifferency, which might leave them at libertie to ſerve, or not to ſerve God in any dutie, how difficult, or dangerous ſoever. And thus have you the Subſtance of the Covenant opened.

2. *How this is to be done.* *Iſay.* 44. 5. *Neh.* 9. *ult.*

* 2 *Chro.* 34. 31.

3. Take we now a ſhort view of the *properties* of this Covenant, and they are two; *perpetuitie* and *heedfulneſſe*.

3. The *Properties* of the Covenant, which are two.

1. It muſt be an *everlaſting Covenant*, in regard of continuance. In the Originall it is ברית עולם, *a Covenant of Ages*. And the 72 *Interpreters* render it to the ſame purpoſe, διαθήκη αἰώνιος, that is, ſuch a Covenant as no time ſhall terminate, till they who make it ceaſe to be. Some underſtand this of engaging themſelves to ſtick cloſe to him in the due celebration of his Legal

1. It muſt be *everlaſting* for continuance.

2. *How this is to be done.*

worship, so long as he should continue it in his Church, (which was till, *Shiloh* came) without those mixtures, wherein formerly they had been too bold, and for which God had spewed them out of his Church, and hurled them as farre as Babylon. Others conceive it to be meant of the *Covenant of Grace* that God had sealed to them in the bloud of his Sonne. But, neither of these are ful. For, it is clearly meant of an *Act* of *theirs* towards *God*, whereby they bind themselves to him, and that not for a definite time only, but for ever.

It is such a binding, as that of the borrower to the Usurer, whom nothing can satisfie but full payment. Or rather, such a closing with God, as is that of the wife to the husband, called, in particular reference to the nuptiall knot, *the Covenant of her God*, Prov. 2. 17. She must be his for ever; that is, *so long as she liveth*, Rom. 7. So that, for men to bind themselves by an *everlasting Covenant* to the Lord, is to bind themselves never to step out from him to Idols, to their base lusts, to any creature, in any strait, upon any occasion, or tentation whatsoever; nor, with the dog, to returne any more to their vomit of any kind. They are in Covenant as the wife to the husband; for they are *marryed unto the Lord for ever*, Hos. 2.

2. It must be *heeded* and *minded*; else, it will be to small purpose to be so *lasting*. It must be a Covenant *that shall not be forgotten*.

2. It must be heeded, and *not forgotten.*

A Covenant, *quod non tradetur oblivioni*; as *Tremelius* well: that is, that shall not be *cast behind their backs*. It is but a plaine mockery for men so to enter Covenant with God, as young Gallants enter into bonds to the Usurer, never thinking more of them, till the day of payment be past, and the Sergeant ready to attach them. *Vnto the*

wicked

wicked ſaith God, what haſt thou to do to take my Covenant into thy mouth, ſeeing thou caſteſt my words behind thee? Pſal. 50. Only they rightly performe this dutie, who ſo joyne themſelves to the Lord, as to *remember*, and *minde* the obligation they have ſealed. As a poore man that meanes honeſtly, if he be neceſſitated to take up money upon his bond, he can hardly eate, walke, ſleep, do any thing, be in any company, but that ſtill his minde runs upon the obligation and day of payment: he complaines he is in debt, he hath given bond for ſo much money, and all his care is how to pay his debts, or to get longer time; ſo it is with a Godly man that hath entred Covenant with the Lord, he hath ſealed a bond, and he knows it muſt be ſatisfied, or it will be put in ſuit. Therefore he *beares it in minde*, he is alwayes caſting about how he may performe, and keep touch with God. *I will never forget thy precepts*, ſaith *David*, *I have inclined mine heart to performe thy Statutes alwayes, even unto the end*, Pſal. 119. 112. This is one expreſſion. 2. *How this is to be done.*

Againe, It is a Covenant to be *remembred*, as that of the *wife*, whereby ſhe ſtands bound to her *husband*: ſhe muſt ever remember it. It is the note of an harlot to *forget the Covenant of her God.* The chaſte wife will ſo *remember* the marriage bond, that if ſhe be ſolicited to unfaithfulneſſe, to uncleanneſſe, &c. ſhe ever hath this in her thoughts, that ſhe hath given her ſelf wholly away to an husband, and is bound to keep her only unto him during life; & this makes her to be even an impregnable wall againſt all aſſaults that might otherwiſe draw her to folly. So muſt it be in the caſe in hand: The Covenant muſt ſtill be in the *heart*, and in the *memory*. In every action of a mans life, in every paſſage and turning of his eſtate and condition, in every deſigne or engagement, *Prov.* 2. 17.

2. *How this is to be done.*

gagement, *this* must *not be forgotten*; viz. "I have entred into Covenant with God, as a wife with her husband; will that I am now doing, or going about, stand "with my Covenant? Is this to performe Covenant "with God? &c. If he be solicited to uncleanesse, to fraud, oppression, any evill whatsoever, this still runs in his minde, There is a Covenant between me and the Lord, I am bound from such courses by the strongest bonds; *How then can I commit this great wickednesse, and sinne against God?*

Psal. 78. 10. What was it for which *Iudah*, and *Israel* became *Captives*, but the breach of the Covenant? *They kept not the Covenant of God*, saith the Psalmist. And, how so? Because they did *not remember* it. As *they soone forgot his workes*, so it was not long ere they *forgot God their Saviour* himselfe too; and then no marvaile, if, at the next bout, they forgot his *Covenant* also, *Psal.* 106. He then, that would not *breake* Covenant, must *not forget* it; but *mind*, and performe it. Otherwise, it is like *vowing unto God*, *Eccles.* 5. *and not paying*, which is worse than *not to vow* at all.

Thus have I dispatcht the Second *generall*, the Kadam, and shewed you *how* and *in what manner* this Covenant must be striken: *first*, in regard of the *disposition and preparation* of the Soule unto it, it must be with *serious seeking* the face of God & humbling the soule before hand; it must be with all *intention* & *earnestnes*, with fervent *Love* and *charity* to draw others the same way. *Next*, in regard of the *Covenant* it self, it must be an *act* & *firm joyning* and *binding* our selves the Lord, as of the *borrower* to the *Lender*; of the *wife* to the *husband*; and that by some *solemne Act*, which may *testifie* it to all the world, and be a *witnesse* against us, if we keep it not. And all this, thirdly for *properties*, must be of *everlasting continuance*, and had

had in *continuall remembrance*, ſo as it may be continually performed of all that make it.

3. I proceed to the third and laſt branch, the *Sixti*, the *Grounds* and *reaſons why*, upon receit of *any deliverance*, but more eſpecially from *Babylon*, people ſhould enter into ſuch a covenant with God. And theſe reſpect deliverances either in *generall*, or from *Babylon* in *ſpeciall*.

3. *Sixti. Cui ſit.* *The Grounds, why it is ſo.* *Theſe are of 2 ſorts.* viz.

1. The reaſons why this muſt be done, upon *any deliverance* in generall, are theſe.

1. *why*, for any deliverance in *generall*.

1. Becauſe God, at no time ſo much as when he beſtowes upon his people ſome notable deliverance, gives ſuch cleere hints and demonſtrations of his willingneſſe to ſtrike an everlaſting Covenant with them. No ſooner had the Lord delivered Iſrael out of Egypt, but within 3. Moneths after, he commanded *Moſes* to tell the people from him; *Ye have ſeene what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on Eagles wings, and brought you out unto my ſelfe. Now therefore if ye will obey my voyce and keep my Covenant, then yee ſhall be a peculiar treaſure unto me above all people.* Exod. 19. 1. and *verſe* 4, 5. God himſelfe, you ſee, was now earneſt for a *Covenant*.

1 God at ſuch times gives cleareſt evidence of his readineſſe to enter Covenant with us.

It is the nature of God, where he beſtowes one benefit, to adde moe, and ſtill to riſe in his bleſſings. Where he once opens his hand to take a people into his protection, he opens his heart to take them into his *boſome*. Where he puts forth his *power* to *reſcue* a people, he puts out his heart to make them *his owne*, if then they have eyes to diſcerne the opportunity. See this moſt excellently demonſtrated *Ier.* 32. from *ver.* 37. to the 42. His gathering them from their *Captivity*, firſt warmes, then melts, and after inflames his heart towards them, making it even then to glow as it were upon them, & to become reſtleſſe till he have beſtowed himſelfe wholly on them

them by solemne *Covenant* to be their God for ever.

3. *Why it is so*, in the generall.

Now then, shall God, at such a time, be so willing and desirous to enter Covenant with men, and shall they think it too much for them to be in Covenant with him? Shall he be fast bound to them, and they left free to sit loose from him? Indeed, this is that which our corrupt nature would willingly have: People would faine be their owne men; which yet in truth, is, to be the greatest slaves. Necessary therefore it is for men, upon receit of *any deliverance*, to renew Covenant with God who is pleased to honour them so farre, as to be in Covenant with them. For, these two are relatives, and ever goe together, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* God is not the God of any people but of his owne Covenant-Servants. The rest, he stiles, *Lo-ammi.* Hos. 1. 9. *for yee are not my people*, saith he, *and I will not be your God.* They will not enter into Covenant with me, and I will make no Covenant with them. That is the first reason.

2. God is content to be bound first.

2. As God is pleased to enter into Covenant with his people, so is he *first* in the Covenant. God requires no man to bind himself by Covenant to Him, till the Lord first strike a Covenant with his Soule. As *we love him, because he loved us first*; so we enter into Covenant with him, because he first entreth into Covenant with us. I *will be their God*, he is first bound, and seales first; and then, and not till then, it followes; *they shall be my people.* This is the constant tenor of the Covenant. And shall he begin, and we think much to follow? Can there be a marriage consummated where onely the man is first married to the woman, and the woman will not after, for her part, be married to the man? Now, God no way so much declares his willingnesse to be in Covenant, and to be *first* in it, as by deliverances (as we shall see more in the

next

next reaſon:) great reaſon therefore, men ſhould then ſecond him by mutuall ſtipulation. It is an hard caſe, when men will not follow, where God leades.

3. Why it is ſo, in the generall.

3. In deliverances God more eſpecially manifeſteth his fidelity in *keeping Covenant* with his people, even when they have *broken Covenant* with him, and forfeited all into his hands. When God delivers a people out of any ſtraite, doth not that uſually ſuppoſe ſome *folly* of theirs going before, & provoking him to caſt them into that affliction; whence, upon their *cry*, he is pleaſed to deliver them?

3. In deliverances God more eſpecially manifeſteth his fidelity in the Grand Covenant. *Pſal.* 107.

And when they have ſo farre and ſo long broken the Lawes, and contemned the Counſel of the moſt high, and *dealt unfaithfully in his Covenant*, as that he hath bin even compelled to throw them into *darkneſſe and the ſhadow of death*: yet if then, upon their humiliation, he be pleaſed to *deliver them out of all their diſtreſſes*; this is to give them freſh experience of his infinite love in *Keeping Covenant and mercy* with them, that kept no Covenant with him. This is called *a remembring of his Covenant* with his people, after that *their uncircumciſed hearts be humbled, and that they accept of the puniſhment of their iniquity*, when God ſhould have caſt them out of their land, among their enemies, as afterward he did. So that, in a deliverance, that which is moſt predominant in God, and ſhould be moſt ſweet and pretious to his people and moſt eyed by them, is his fidelity, mercy, and unchangeable Love in bringing out that Covenant he once made with them, and ſpreading it before himſelfe, and making of it good, even when they could not exſpect it, nor durſt to plead it. Hence that paſſionate ſpeech of God to rebellious *Ephraim*. *Is Ephraim my deare ſonne? is he a pleaſant child?* As if he ſhould have ſaid,

Levit. 26. 41, 42.

Ier. 31. 20.

3. *Why it is so*, in the generall.

said, surely he cannot cannot conclude so; yet, my love, by vertue of the ancient Covenant betwen us, makes me still so to account him: witnesse that which followes; *for since I spake against him*, (that is, as resolving to cast him off for ever) *I remember him still*, (I remember I am in Covenant with him,) *therefore my bowels are troubled for him, I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.* Thus, deliverance is a thread drawne out of the bowells of his Covenant. Great reason therefore that, in this case, his people should think of renewing their league and Covenant with the Lord on their parts, when they have so shamefully broken it, and yet he goes on in so much mercy to manifest his fidelity in *remembring* and *keeping* the Couenant on his part, by giving them deliverance.

No complete deliverance and happinesse, without a Covenant.

Againe, fourthly and lastly, All our hopes of a *full deliverance*, of complete happinesse, will be delayed, if not frustrate; and, the next deliverance will stick in the birth, and want strength to bring forth, if we come not up to a Covenant for deliverances already received. If God have delivered us once, he will do it no more: or, if he do somewhat, to hold us up by the chin that we sink not, yet will he hold us down from the throne, that we reigne not, till we come up actually and fully in this point of Covenanting with him. It is only to those that *take hold of his Covenant*, that he *gives an everlasting name which shall not be cut off*, Isay 56. 4, 5.

He that hath obtained most and greatest deliverances, will, ere long, stand in need of more. Now, one thing is necessary to draw down more, and to move God to *command* (*further*) *deliverances for Iacob*; yea, to powre out his whole bosome into the laps of his people, and to crowne all deliverances and blessings received, with this assurance, that he that *hath delivered*, will yet

again deliver; and that *is*, to enter into a ſolemne Covenant with the Lord, upon conſideration of what he hath done already, how ever he ſhould pleaſe to deale with us for the future, or for removing any preſent preſſures that lye upon us. Although God begin to deliver, yet he will never perfect the deliverance, till this be done. The people which returned from *Babylon*, found God to keep touch with them, to a day. So ſoone as the 70. yeeres determined, their captivitie was diſſolved, and ſomewhat was done, the *foundation* of the *Lords houſe* was laid, but the building went ſlowly up, the reformation of Church and State went heavily on; and, they were never in a thriving condition, till *Nehemiah*, by the good hand of God, lighted upon this courſe. Some *Faſts* they had kept before, yea very many; but they never thrived, till he added to their publique and ſolemne *Faſting*, the faſtening of them to God by a *ſolemne Covenant*. Then, the worke of Reformation, and eſtabliſhment, went on merrily, then they proſpered. Thus farre the Reaſons concluding for a Covenant, upon receit of deliverances in *generall*.

3. *Why it is ſo*

See *Iudges* 10. from *verſ.* 9. to *verſ.* 17.

2. The Reaſons inducing us thereunto, upon deliverance from *Babylon* in *particular*, are theſe.

2 *Why*, for deliverance from *Babylon*, in ſpeciall.

1. Becauſe *Babylon* (after once the Church was put under her power) had alwayes been the moſt inſolent, heavy, bitter, bloudy enemy that ever the Church felt. The violence of *Babylon* was unſupportable, her inſolency intolerable, her bloud-thirſtineſſe inſatiable. Hence the Church is bold to challenge all the world to match her miſery under the yoke of Babylon; *Behold, and ſee, if there be any ſorrow like unto my ſorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me*, (that is, by the heavy hand of Babylon) *in the day of his fierce wrath*, Lam. 1. 12.

1. *Babylon* hath ever been the foreſt enemy.

3. *Why it is ſo*, in ſpeciall.

. This was ſo ſore, that it hath been by ſome Fathers, and others, conceived to be the fulleſt and moſt lively typicall expreſſion of that matchleſſe agony and extremitie which our Lord himſelfe (hanging upon the *Croſſe*) ſuſtained, when he bare all our ſinnes, and the wrath of God due to us for them, ſo farre as to make a full ſatisfaction to the Juſtice of his Father, in behalfe of all his people.

And, as it was with old *Babylon*, ſo it is, and ever will be with the new, (I meane, *myſticall Babylon*) to the end of the world; might ſhe ſo long continue. Even ſhe alſo delights in no other drink but the bloud of the Saints, as you ſhall finde in *Rev.* 17. 5. where the very name written upon her forehead ſufficiently ſets out her nature: *Myſtery, Babylon the Great, the Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.* And, what of her? *I ſaw*, ſaith Saint *Iohn*, *the woman drunken with the bloud of the Saints, and with the bloud of the Martyrs of Ieſus: and when I ſaw her, I wondred with great admiration*, verſ. 6. And well he might. A *woman*, and *drunk*! And, if *drunk*, would no liquor ſuffice, but *bloud*! no *bloud*, but that of *Saints and Martyrs*! She is never in her element, but when ſhe is ſwimming in bloud. So inſatiable is ſhe, that like the *horſe-leeches* daughter, *ſhe never ſaith, it is enough.*

Therefore, when God gives any deliverance from thence, there is more than ordinary cauſe to cloſe with the Lord, in a more ſolemne and extraordinary manner, giving him the praiſe and glory of ſo great a mercy. But then more eſpecially, when God works out the *full deliverance* of his Church, by the totall, and finall ruine of *Babylon*. Oh then, then is the time when all the people in heaven muſt ſing *Hallelujah*; aſcribing, *ſalvation, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God*, Revel. 19. 1.

And

And againe, Hallelujah, verſ. 3. as if they could never ſufficiently expreſſe themſelves to God for ſuch a deliverance, ſuch a mercy, ſuch a vengeance.

3. *Why it is ſo*, in ſpeciall.

2. Againe. When God delivereth from *Babylon*, there is more than ordinary cauſe of entring into ſolemne Covenant with him, becauſe the very ſubjecting of the Godly under that iron yoke, argues more than ordinary breach of Covenant with the Lord in time paſt, which ſtirred him up to deale ſo ſharply with them as to put them under the power of *Babylon*. The Provocation was exceeding great, too much to be endured even by infinite Patience it ſelfe: elſe, the People of God had never been caſt into ſuch a furnace. It was for ſuch a fault as diſſolved the very marriage knot between God and his people: it was for *going a whoring from him*. For this it was, that God firſt *put away Iſrael*, giving her a Bill of divorce, *Ier.* 3. 8. And for this it was, that he afterwards caſt *Iudah* alſo out of his ſight, 2 *King.* 17. 19, 20. And as it was in former times, ſo in later Ages of the world. What was the reaſon that ſo many millions of ſoules have been expoſed to the butchery of Antichriſt in Myſticall *Babylon*, and to be ſo hood-winckt and blinded *by ſtrong deluſions*, as *to beleeve* nothing but lyes; even that Great, Great ſoul-killing *Lye*, that they might be damned? Saint *Paul* tells us, it was this; *They received not the love of the trueth that they might be ſaved*, but *had pleaſure in unrighteouſneſſe*, 2 *Theſſ.* 2. What *unrighteouſneſſe?* Is it meant of every unrighteouſneſſe (that is in the nature of it damnable) which is to be found in the world? Surely no: but (*ſignanter*) of that *unrighteouſneſſe* whereby men *turned the truth of God into a lye*, Rom. 1. that is, by corrupting the true worſhip of the true God, and afterwards falling off to down-right

2. Such a deliverance implyes more than ordinary breach of Covenant on our parts, for which God formerly put us under ſuch a yoke.

3. *Why it is so*, in speciall.

Idolatry, even within the pales of the Church it self.

Most of you are well seene in the History of the Church, and can soone point with your finger to the times wherein *Babylon* began to besiege *Hierusalem*, and *Antichrist* began to pull of his vizzard, in the Churches of Christ: even then, when *Pictures* and *Images* began first to be set up in *Churches*, for *remembrance*; then, for *ornament*; then, for *instruction* too; and at last, for *adoration* and worship. Then, God suffered her to be over-run, and over-spred by *Babylon*, as by an hideous *opacum* or thick darkenesse, and to be exposed and prostituted to all manner of whoredomes and filthinesse: so as the slavery of the Jewish Church in old *Babylon*, was scarce a flea-biting, in comparison of the miseries of the Church Christian under the *New*, which maks havock and merchandise not of the *bodies* only, but even *of the soules of men*, Revel. 18, 13.

Now then, when God pleaseth to deliver a people from such bondage, and to awaken them effectually to look up, and to reflect even with astonishment upon those great and gastly sins of theirs, which had cut asunder the cords of the Covenant between God and their Soules, and provoked God to subject them to so much bondage; and, that they must either renew Covenant, or be obnoxious to more wrath, and be laid open to more and greater temptations and sins; this cannot but exceedingly work upon their souls, causing their hearts to melt, and their very bowels to yearne after the Lord, to enter into a new, *an everlasting Covenant that shall never be forgotten.*

This is that which God by his servant *Ezekiel*, spake touching the deportment of the remnant of *Israel*, which should escape the sword among the nations and countries

countries whither they had been carryed captives, *Ezek.* 6. 9. They ſhould, upon ſuch a deliverance, *remember* God, not only with griefe, but reſolution alſo to joyne themſelves to him more firmely in a perpetuall Covenant. For, of them, he ſaith there; *they that eſcape of you ſhall remember me among the nations, becauſe I am broken with their whoriſh heart which hath departed from me, and with their eyes which goe a whoring after their idols, and they ſhall loth themſelves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations.* And of the ſame people he ſaith, afterwards, * that, upon their returne home, *They ſhall take away all the deteſtable things, and all the abominations thereof from thence. And I will give them one heart, and put a new ſpirit within them, I will take away the ſtony heart out of their fleſh, and give them an heart of fleſh, that they they may walke in my Statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and doe them: and they ſhall be my people, and I will be their God.* So that here is a full Covenant ſtriken, and that upon this ground: viz. the Conſideration of thoſe great ſinnes they formerly committed, whereby they had broken their firſt Covenant and departed from their God.

3. *Why it is ſo,* in ſpeciall.

* cap. 11. 18, 19, 20.

So farre the Reaſons, and Grounds of the point; I ſhall now as breifly as I can, endeavour to bring home, and ſet on all by ſome Application, which I ſhall reduce to 3. heads, namely to matter of *Reproofe, Information* and *Exhortation.* For, if, *When God vouchſafeth any deliverance to his people, eſpecially from Babylon, it be moſt ſeaſonable and neceſſary to cloſe with him, by a more ſolemne, firme, and inviolable Covenant, to be onely his forever*: Then,

Application Threefold

1. How may this reprove, and condemne of great ingratitude and folly, many ſorts of men among us, that are farre from making any ſuch uſe of the deliverances which

1. *Vſe,* of *Reproofe*

1. *Vse. Reproofe*

which God hath wrought for them. O beloved! Should I but give you a Catalogue of the many, great, ſtupendious, and even miraculous deliverances which God hath given us; the perſonall deliverances he hath often given to each of us apart; the publique, eminent, glorious deliverances he hath given to us together with the whole State; that, in 88. and that of 1605. I meane from the horrid helliſh *Gun-powder-Treaſon*; but eſpecially, and above all the reſt, our happy deliverance out of *Babylon* by the bleſſed Reformation of Religion begun amongſt us, ſome good number of yeeres by paſt; the time would faile me. But alas! What *uſe* have we made of them? Hath this *uſe* ever been ſo much as thought of by us? Nay verily. For,

Of foure ſorts of men, viz.

1. Of ſuch as think a Covenant needfull in trouble, but not after deliverance.

1. Some thinke it bootleſſe, thus to *cloſe* in with God, after an evill is over. When Gods hand is heavy upon them, ſenſe of ſmart compels them to thinke it then a fit ſeaſon to do ſomewhat, to confeſſe their ſins; to humble themſelves, and to ſeek God. *In their affliction they will ſeek me early*, ſaith the Lord. But ſo ſoone as he takes his hand off from them, they caſt all care away, as if now (according to that homely proverb) *the devill were dead*, and no further uſe of any feare, or diligence were to be once thought upon, till (with *Pharaoh*) they come under a worſe plague than before; and, as if God had delivered them to no other end, but to live as they liſt, to caſt more dung into his face, and to diſhonour and provoke him yet more than ever before.

Hoſea 5. 15.

I appeale to the conſciences of many who heare me this day, and I require them from the Lord, to witneſſe truly, whether it be not even thus with them. If the plague knock at their doore, if death get in at the window, and begin to ſhake them by the hand; there is then

ſome

ſome apprehenſion of wrath and judgement; ſome humbling, ſome hankering after God. Then, Oh what would not theſe men do, what would not they promiſe, on condition to be delivered from their preſent anguiſh, and feares! But once deliver them, and God ſhall heare no more of them, till they be in the ſame, or worſe caſe again. They turne *Covenanters?* Nay, leave that to the *Puritans*. For their parts, they think more of a *Covenant with death and hell*: for, *God is not in all their thoughts*. 1. *Vſe. Reproofe.*

Had there been, upon the diſcovery of the Powder-Treaſon, (which this Honourable Aſſembly hath cauſe above all others to preſerve eternally in freſh remembrance, and to think more ſeriouſly what God looks for at all your hands upon ſuch a deliverance) had there been, I ſay, no poſſibilitie of eſcaping that Blow, what would not men have then done! Oh what prayers, what faſting, what humiliation ſhould we have ſeene! But, when the ſnare was once broken, what followed? A *Covenant* with God? Nothing leſſe; for, ſo ſoone as ever the danger, the feare, the amazement at ſuch an helliſh project, and the neere approach to the execution of it, was a little over; the Traitors themſelves fell not deeper into the pit of deſtruction which themſelves had digged, than generally all ſorts of men did into the gulfe of their old ſins, as if they owed more to *Hell*, than to *Heaven*, for ſo great a deliverance. And, is it better now? Where is the *Covenant* (ſuch a Covenant) with God, that ſo wonderfull a deliverance deſerveth, and requireth?

Theſe men may pleaſe themſelves, and feed ſweetly upon a vain dreame, that there is no harme in all this; but the Apoſtle brings them in a ſad reckoning, after a ſharp chiding for it, *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. What? ſaith he; *Deſpiſeſt*

1. *Vse. Reproofe.* *thou the riches of his goodnesse and forbearance, and long suffering, not knowing that the goodnesse of God leadeth thee to repentance?* The end of all Gods *goodnesse* in forbearing, advancing, and giving thee prosperitie; and of his *long suffering*, in sparing thee when thou hast abused prosperitie; and of all his mercy, in delivering thee out of adversitie; is, *to lead thee to repentance*, to draw thee neerer to Himself, even *in an everlasting Covenant*. And if it have not this effect on thee, the Apostle hath said it, and the God of Heaven will make it good, that *thou despisest the riches of his goodnesse*, &c. Thou trampleſt all mercies under thine impure feet, when they do not raise and screw thee up so neere to thy God, as to enter a solemne *Covenant* with them. And, what then? Thou wilt not stay there, but fall into more sinne, and under greater judgement; and, *after thy hardnesse and impenitent heart, treasurest up unto thy selfe wrath* (that is, more and more *wrath*) against the *day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgement of God*. This is the end of all who make not the *Goodnesse* of God, a prevailing motive thus *to joyne themselves to the Lord*; they fall into moe, and greater sinnes, and abominations; and so adde daily to that great heape, and to those Sea's of divine wrath that hang over their heads, to overwhelme and confound them for ever.

2. Of such as having means of deliverance think it enough to rid out of the way the instruments of their evils.

2. Others, if, after some time of lying under the weight of many pressures of the Church and State, they arrive at some hopes and opportunities of easing themselves of those burdens, and of freeing the Land of the great Instruments of all their evils; they conceit strongly, that, if this be done, all is done. If but some of the *Nimrods* who have invaded their Laws, and Liberties, be pulled down, (Which is an act of Justice) how do the

the *Many* (who do nothing towards any Reformation of themſelves) rejoyce, and promiſe to themſelves great matters! Now (think they) there will be an end of all our miſeries, and we ſhall ſee golden dayes; *Iudgement ſhall run down like waters, and righteouſneſſe like a mightie ſtreame.* 1. *Vſe. Reproofe.* *Amos* 5. 24.

Oh Brethren! deceive not your ſelves. If this be all you look at; if, upon opening this *doore of hope*, this be all you ayme at, to make uſe of the time to ſecure your ſelves againſt oppreſſors, and never thinke of cloſing with God; or, but thinke of it; you may perhaps goe farre in purſuit of your owne deſignes, in providing againſt the evils you ſigh under; and, this Parliament may do great things this way: But let me tell you from God, that this will never do the deed, till the *Covenant* we have been all this while ſpeaking of, be reſolved on, and ſolemnly entred into by all thoſe that expect any bleſſing from that High Aſſembly. Nor this, nor all the Parliaments in the world ſhall ever be able to make us happy in ſuch a degree at leaſt as we expect, till the Lord hath even *glewed*, and *marryed* us all unto himſelf by mutuall Covenant.

It is not only the making of good Lawes to remove our preſent grievances; no, nor the cutting down of all the evil Inſtruments in our State or Church at one blow, that can ſecure us againſt the like; yea, worſe evils for the future; but rather, as one wave follows another, ſo one miſchiefe will ſtill tread on the heeles of another, and greater plagues will ever crowd in after the former, till we cloſe with God by ſuch a ſolemne Covenant.

The people of *Paleſtine*, or *Philiſtia*, made themſelves marvellous merry, when any of the Governours or Kings of *Iſrael*, or *Iudah* (ſuch as *Sampſon*, *David*, *Vzziah*, &c.)

1. *Vse. Reproofe.* that had sorely yoked and hampered them, were removed by death, and others come in the roome that could do but little againſt them. When ſuch an one as *Ahaz* who never wonne battaile of them, but ſtill went by the worſe, ſwayed the Scepter; oh how joyfull were the *Philiſtines*! But marke what a damp God caſt in among them in the midſt of all their mirth; *Rejoyce not thou whole Paleſtina, becauſe the rod of him that ſmote thee is broken*; (that *Vzziah*, and other Potent and ſucceſſefull Kings are taken away, and weake unhappy *Ahaz* come in the roome) *for out of the Serpents root ſhall come forth a Cockatrice, and his fruit ſhall be a fiery flying ſerpent.* *Ahaz* ſhall leave an *Hezekiah* behind him, that ſhall pay all his Fathers debts upon the *Philiſtines*, and plague them yet more than all that went before him.

Iſay. 14. 28.

See 2. *King.* 18. 8.

And have not we ſeen this verified alſo neerer home? Have not ſome, in former times, been taken away, who have been great Oppreſſors, and Inſtruments of many ſore preſſures? And, how have men rejoyced at their falls? Nor know I, why they ſhould not, if Juſtice in a juſt way have cut them off. But alas! what Good, in the iſſue, hath followed, or can be yet hoped for ſo long as men continue *Philiſtines*, enemies to God & his Church, *Anti-Covenanters* (even with *Hell*) rather than true *Covenanters* with God? Whether is our Condition any what better now than heretofore, when thoſe *Leviathans* were alive, and in their height? I appeale to your ſelves. And the reaſon of all is this, that men miſtake the meanes of Cure, or at leaſt fall ſhort of it. The cutting off of evill Doers (how neceſſary ſoever it be) is not all, nor the maine requiſite to make a people happy; unleſſe alſo there be a thorough joyning of themſelves to God by *Covenant*.

If you therefore that be now convened in Parliament, ſhould ſit ſo long as you deſire, even theſe 7 yeares, (if your buſineſſe ſhould require it) and think, you would make ſuch Examples of men that have violated the Lawes, and invaded your Liberties; and enact ſo many wholeſome Lawes to prevent the like preſumptions for the future, as ſhould put us into a new world, cauſing men to admire the happy ſtate and frame of Government which you would ſet up: yet all this would never produce the expected effect, but prove as a meer dreame of an hungry man, who *in his dreame eateth* aboundantly, *but when he awakes, is empty*; unleſſe you alſo, not onely reſolve upon, but execute this maine duty of entring *Covenant* with your God. 1. *Vſe. Reproofe.*

Againe, thirdly, others can *roare like beares, and mourn ſore like doves*, when they find themſelves diſappointed of their hopes: when Parliaments have been broken up in diſcontent, *when they have looked for Iudgment, and there is none, for ſalvation, but it hath bin farre from them*: then, they have howled like dragons, not onely for afflictions, but perhaps for ſinnes alſo, eſpecially if deliverance upon deliverance hath been ſnatcht from them, even when it hath ſeemed ſo neer that they had begun to take poſſeſſion of it: yet, (ſilly men that they are!) their evills haunt them ſtill, and prevaile more and more, after all their faſtings, humblings, and ſtrong cryes to God their Redeemer. For alas! what will all this doe without a *Covenant*, without taking hold of God, and *joyning themſelves* to him to be his for ever? you may ſee ſuch a State of the Church as this deſcribed by *Iſaiah*: & good were it for us to take warning by it: *We all doe fade as a leafe, and our iniquities like the wind have taken us away.* And why all this? The next words will tell you; *there is* 3. Of ſuch as thinke extraordinary *Faſting* and *Prayer* ſufficient, without a Covenant. *Iſa.* 59. 11. *Iſa.* 64. 6, 7.

1. *Vse. Reproofe.*

none that calleth upon thy name, that stirreth up himselfe to take hold of thee, say they to the Lord who had *hid his face from them, and consumed them for their sinnes*. Not that they did not at all call upon God, but, because they did not so call upon him as to *sturre up themselves to take hold of him* by Covenant; therefore is it accounted no better than a not calling upon him at all. Thus men lose not onely their opportunities of deliverances offered, but their duties also by which they desire to further it against another time.

4. Of such as are convinced of the necessity of a Covenant, yet come not up to it. *Hos.* 13. 14.

4. Some, it may be, goe yet further. Vpon the hearing of such a duty (so much pressed and inculcated) they begin to be a little stirred; they are convinced that it is is indeed true, such a Covenant is fit to be made: but here (like *Ephraim* an *unwise sonne*) *they stand still at the breaking forth of the Children* of the Covenant. They faine would, but loth they be to go thorough with the bargaine. They begin to come on, and then fall back againe. They are so long a cheapning, treating, complementing, disputing how safe it may be for them, how well it may stand with their profits, projects, ends, interests, relations; that they coole againe, & never come up to a full resolution. Oh, sayes one, this is a good course, and fit to be taken: but, my engagements, callings, Alliance, company, service will not consist with it. Another sweares, he could find in his heart to make triall of it, but that he should be jeered, scorned, and perhaps lose his place, or hopes, for it: another, he is for it, but at present he cannot enter upon it. Thus one thing or other still keepes this duty without doores, and holds most men off from the worke for ever.

But beloved, take heed of this dallying. What ever you think, it is no better than a *departing away from the living*

living God, that ſprings from *an evill heart of unbeleife*; 1. *Vſe.*
when, being fully convinced of the weight, neceſſity, *Reproofe.*
and commodity of the duty, you will yet, *while it is called to day*, adventure ſo farre to *harden your hearts*, as not to ſet upon the work inſtantly, and to go thorough with it. *Heb.* 3.

Woe unto all ſuch dodging Chriſtians; they ſhall find to their coſt that God will write them *Lo-ammi*, Hoſ. 1. 9. and pronounce of them, *They are not my people, and I am not their God.*

If any think, what adoe is here? what meanes this man to be ſo earneſt? would he have us all turne Covenanters? yes, with *God*. Why, what if I doe not? Then never looke for good from him, how faire ſoever thy hopes be. "No? ſayes another; Ile try that, ſure. I have "ſeene many a good day in my time, and hope to "ſee more, though I never ſwallow this doctrine: therefore he reſolves to goe hence, as he came hither; as he lived yeſterday, ſo he will to morrow, though this day he doe as his neighbours doe, keeping ſome order, (much againſt the will of his baſe luſts that ring him but an harſh peale in his eare for this little abſtinence) yet to morrow he will be for his ſwearing, drinking, whoring, any exceſſe, and riot, as much as ever; and yet, by grace of God he hopes to prove all theſe words to be but wind, and to doe as well as the beſt of them all when he comes to die.

But woe worth the day that ever ſuch a man was born that when he heares God calling him with ſo much importunity *to ſtand* even *this very day before the Lord, to enter into Covenant with the Lord his God, and into his Oath*, ſhall ſo harden his neck, and harbour ſuch *a roote of gall and worme wood* within his heart, as when he heares *the*

words

1. *Vse.* *Reproofe.* *of the Curse* upon all those that will not enter into Covenant; or, entring into it shall not keep it, he *shall blesse himselfe in his heart saying, I shall have peace, though I walke in the imagination of mine heart, and adde drunkennes to thirst:* See, and tremble at what God hath resolved to doe with that man, *Deut.* 29. 20, 21. *The Lord will not spare him, but the anger of the Lord, and his jealousy shall smoake against that man; and all the Curses that are written in (Gods) Booke shall ly upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under Heaven.* Here is nothing but fury powred out, upon such a wretch; not a blessing shall descend upon him, not a curse shall escape and go by him; not onely himselfe, and posterity, but his very name (so farre as it is an honour) shall all be cast out of the world, as out of the midst of a sling.

If he please himselfe with this, "Yet I shall live as "long as some others; if they have any happinesse, I "resolve to share with them; he will find that God will not leave him so, but *the Lord will separate him unto evill out of all the the Tribes of Israel*, so as, though all others be safe; yet, as a strucken Deere is unhearded from all the rest, and followed by the dogs till he be pull'd downe and kill'd; so shall it be with this man, *according to all the curses of the the Covenant, that are written in the Booke of the Law.* Although the whole Kingdome be safe, and all others in it be in peace, yet he and his house shall perish; the line of Confusion shall be stretched out over him, hell and damnation shall be his portion, how high soever he now beares his head, and how much so ever he suffer his heart to swell against the truth, supposing all that he likes not, to be nothing but a spice of indiscretion, yea of faction, and (it may be) of Sedition; when yet nothing is offered, but what is (I trust) pregnantly

ly proved out of Holy Scripture. So farre the firſt *Vſe*. 2. *Vſe*.

2. This may *informe* us touching the true cauſe (which moſt neerely concernes our ſelves) of the ſlow proceedings of Reformation of things amiſſe among us, both in the Church and Common-wealth: Why God hath not yet given us ſo full a deliverance from *Babylon*; why there have been ſo many ebbings and flowings in matters of Religion, yea, more ebbings than flowings; Why generall grievances ſwell to ſuch an height, and that all the opportunities of cure have vaniſhed, ſo ſoone as appeared: how it comes to paſſe that albeit God hath moved the heart of the King to call Parliament after Parliament, yet by and by, one ſpirit of diviſion or another, ſometimes from one quarter, ſometimes from another, (like the *evill ſpirit* which God ſent *between Abimelech, and the men of Shechem*, to the ruine of both) ſtill comes between, & blaſteth all our hopes, leaving us in worſe caſe than we were in before; & whence it is (in regard of our ſelves) that in ſtead of ſetting up the Kingdome and Ordinances of Chriſt in more purity, there is ſuch a contrary mixture, and ſuch a corrupting of all things, in Doctrine, in worſhip, in every thing; *Arminianiſme*, *Socinianiſme* and *Popiſh Idolatry* breaking in againe over all the Kingdome like a floud.

Information, touching the chiefe cauſe why Reformation and full redreſſe of our evills goes on ſo ſlowly.

Judg. 9. 23, 24.

What is a chiefe cauſe of all this? Have we not *prayed*? have we not *faſted*? Have we not had more *Faſts* at *Parliaments* of late, than in many yeares before? Yea, hath not there been, generally among Gods people, more frequent humiliations, more frequent ſeeking of God, notwithſtanding the malice and rage of ſome men to diſcountenance and ſuppreſſe it, than in former times? Why then is Deliverance, and Reformation ſo ſlow in comming?

2. *Vse. Information*

Surely, Beloved, we have all this while mistaken the maine businesse, and neglected the principall part of a Religious *Fast*. You come, *Fast* after *Fast*, to seek God in his House; You forbeare your victuals, afflict your soules, endure it out a long time; you pray, heare, confesse your sins, and freely acknowledge that all is just that God hath brought upon us, and that we suffer lesse than we deserve. All this is well. But here is the error, and the true Cause of the continuance of all our evils, and of their growing greater, namely, that all this while we have never, in any *Fast*, or at any other time, entred into such a solemne and publique *Covenant* with God, as his people of old have often done upon like occasions and exigents.

That I may yet more effectually bring home this to all our hearts, give me leave briefly to parallel the slow pace of our deliverance out of *Mysticall Babylon* with that of *Iudah*, and some of the remnant of Israel out of *old Babylon*, which for a long time had held them Captives.

And here first, be pleased to call to minde, that, as touching the Captive *Iewes*, God failed not (on his part) of his promise. At the end of 70 yeeres, libertie of returne from *Babylon* to *Hierusalem* was proclaimed, in the first yeere of *Cyrus* the *Persian* Monarch: whereupon, many did returne, under the conduct of *Zorobbabel*. Being come home to Hierusalem, we may not conceive that they were not at all touched with sense of their deliverance, or of the sinnes which had formerly provoked the Lord to cast them into that great bondage out of which they were delivered.

Ezra 1. 1, 2.
Ezra. 2.

Well, on they go; first, to offer sacrifices in the right place, *Although the foundation of the Temple of the Lord*

Ezra. 3. 6.

was

was not yet laid. In the ſecond yeere of their coming Zorobbabel began *to ſet forward the work of the houſe of the Lord,* and the foundation was laid. But *the adverſaries of Iudah* (the Great Officers of the Kingdome under the King of *Perſia*) apprehending, or rather pretending, the going on of this building to be matter of prejudice and danger to that Monarchy, they procure a ſtay of it, upon reaſon of State; ſo as it was well nigh an hundred yeers ere they got libertie to go on again, and it was above an 100 yeeres before the Temple could be finiſhed. For, as many exact Chronologers obſerve, the Temple was not perfected in the reigne of *Darius Hyſtaſpis*, as ſome have thought; but in the ſixth yeere of *Darius Nothus*, between whom and the former *Darius*, both *Xerxes* (the husband of *Eſther*, and called in Scripture *Ahaſhuerus*) and *Artaxerxes Longimanus* ſucceſſively ſwayed the *Perſian* Scepter. In all which time, many things were amiſſe; Crueltie, Oppreſſion, Adultery, Mixture with ſtrange wives, and other great deformations remained. Then comes *Ezra*, after the Temple was finiſhed, and ſomewhat he did, to ſet forward the work of Reformation, in the ſeventh yeere of *Artaxerxes Mnemon*, ſucceſſor to *Darius Nothus*. And yet, there was much more to do. After him therefore, comes *Nehemiah*, in the twentieth yeere of the ſame *Artaxerxes Mnemon*; and, after all the former endeavours, he findes the Church ſtill weltring in her bloud, and even wallowing in her owne gore; I meane, in moſt of her old and long continued ſins; (although cured of Idolatry) ſo that ſtill there was great corruption in doctrine, in worſhip, and in manners.

2. *Vſe. Information.*

Verſ. 8.

Verſ. 10.

Ezra. 4. 1.

Ezra 7. 7.

Neh. 1. 1.

Whereupon he now reſolves, and ſets upon a more thorough Reformation of all theſe; but could never effect it, till beſide the proclaiming, and holding of a

2. *Vse. Information.* *Neh.* 9. *ult.* and 10, 29.

publique *Fast*, he and all the people lighted upon this course, namely, of entring into a publique and solemne *Covenant* with the Lord, *subscribed*, *sealed* and *sworne* unto, as before you have heard: and so, from that time forward, the worke prospered, and the Church was purged of many abominations, wherewith till that time she was defiled.

Behold here, *Quanta molis erat dilectam condere Gentem*, how great a work, how long a businesse to perfect a Reformation even of Gods deerest people. Their captivitie in *Babylon* lasted not halfe so long time, as was spent after their returne thence, ere their Reformation could be brought to any tolerable perfection.

And why so? Did they omit *prayer*, and *fasting*, and seeking early after God? surely no. For, in *Zach.* 8. 19. we read of foure severall publique Fasts, (* *The fast of the fourth moneth, the fast of the fifth moneth, the fast of the seventh, and the fast of the tenth moneth*) which they held, not only by all the time of the 70 yeeres captivitie in *Babylon*, but many yeeres after their return thence, *Zach.* 7. 3. and *vers.* 5. But all this labour was in great part lost, for want of this addition to all their humiliation, and prayer; namely, *The joyning of themselves to the Lord in an everlasting Covenant not to be forgotten.*

And when God once directed *Nehemiah* to this course, see, how all things began to thrive and come on a maine. Now, not only the *Temple*, but even the *walls* of *Hierusalem* were built up, (and that within one twelve yeeres after this Covenant was smitten) which before lay wast many scores of yeeres.

Let us now reflect upon our selves, and the State of Religion, and progresse of Reformation in our owne Church, that we may make up the Parallel.

Some beginnings of our deliverance from *Babylon*,

* *Quarto mense Vrbs fuit expugnata, quinto autem fuerat excisum Templum & consumptum incendio: septimo mense interfectus tandem fuit Godolias, qui steterat cum residua plebe qui collecta fuerat ab ejus manu. Iejunium autem decimi mensis putant fuisse institutum post urbem obsessam. Ergo jejunium mensis decimi, tempore alio præcessit,* Calvin. *in Loc.* Non, quod hæc omnia in eodem acciderunt anno, sed diversis annorum intervallis.

we received by King *Henry* the eighth. For, he threw out the *Pope*. His ſonne King *Edward* the ſixth came after, and caſt out Popery, in the body and bulke of it. A great work, and a large ſtep, for the ſhort time of his infant reigne. And indeed, he had many excellent helps that way, (beſide the zeale of his own pious heart) an Excellent Archbiſhop, a Prudent and vigilant Protector, beſide others; elſe he could never have done ſo much. Notwithſtanding, the potency and ſecret underminings of thoſe mightie Factions then prevailing, hindred the work not a little, ſo that it exceeded not an infant-*Reformation*; yea, through the immature death of that *Ioſiah*, it ſoone prov'd abortive.

2. *Vſe. Information.*

The Princeſſe that came after, quickly turn'd the Tide, before it was half high water: and ſhe ſet all the Gates wide open againe both for Pope, and Popery to re-enter with triumph, and to drink drunk of the bloud of our Anceſtors, till God diſcharged her, and releaſed his people from her crueltie.

So that when Queene *Elizabeth* (that glorious *Deborah*) mounted the Throne, although her heart was upright and loathed the Idolatry of the former Reigne, yet found ſhe worke enough to reſtore any thing at all, and to make any beginnings of a Reformation. She ſoone felt, when ſhe would have throughly pluckt up Popery both root and branch, (ſuperfluous Ceremonies, and all remaining raggs of ſuperſtition, as well as groſſe Idolatry) that ſhe had to do with an *Hydra*, having ſuch a ſtrong partie of ſtout Popelings to grapple with at home, and ſuch potent and dangerous abetters of them, to cope withall abroad. I need not name them. I might adde hereunto, ſome difficulties ariſing from the intereſts and engagements of not a few of

2. *Vſe. Information.*

thoſe (though good, and holy men) that underwent voluntary exile in the heat of the *Marian* perſecution; who, while they were abroad, had a large ſhare in the *troubles at Franckford*; (too eagerly, perhaps, purſuing the *Engliſh* Formes of *Worſhip*, and *Diſcipline*) and ſo, when upon their returne, they were advanced to places of Dignitie, and Government in this Church, they were the more apt and forward to maintaine and hold up that Cauſe wherein they had ſo farre appeared, and for which (ſome of them) with more heat than Charitie had ſo openly declared themſelves, in forreine parts. And ſo, what by one impediment, and what by another, we ſee it hath been a long time ere our Reformation can be thoroughly poliſhed and perfected as were to be wiſhed and deſired; for there is nothing ſo perfect, here, but is capable of more perfection.

Nay, ſo farre are we become now from going forward with the work, notwithſtanding the pietie and care of our Princes ſince the laſt Reſtitution of Religion in this Kingdome, that (as it was in *Ioſiahs* time, though his own heart were for God, yet there was a pack of rotten men, both Prieſts and People, very great pretenders to Devotion, but indeed mad upon Images, and Idols) we begin to fall quite back again; and, not only to coaſt anew upon the brinks of *Babylon*, from whence we were happily delivered, but even to launch out into her deepeſt Lakes of ſuperſtition and Idolatry, under pretence of ſome extraordinary *pietie of the times*, and of ſome *good work in hand*.

What is the reaſon of all this, but that (not ſo much as once) ſince the firſt beginning of Reformation of Religion in this Iſland, we never (for ought I know) entred into ſuch a ſolemn, publique, univerſall *Covenant*

to

to be the Lords, as he requireth for thoſe beginnings already given us; but have ſate looſe from God, and ſo have not joyned together as one man, zealouſly to pro-pugne his trueth and Ordinances, and to ſtand by him and his Cauſe, as becomes the people of God, in all juſt and warrantable wayes, againſt all oppoſers and gainſayers. 2. *Vſe. Information.*

So long as we pleaſe our ſelves in this libertie of our holding off from a Covenant with God, we may feed our ſelves with vaine hopes of redreſſe of things amiſſe, but ſhall ſpeed no better than thoſe libertines and backſliders in *Ier.* 14. who lookt for great matters from God, but came ſhort of all, and then ſeemed to wonder at the reaſon. For, thus they beſpeake him, ver. 8. *O the hope of Iſrael, the Saviour thereof in time of trouble, why ſhouldeſt thou be as a ſtranger in the Land, and as a wayfaring man, that turneth aſide to tarry* (onely) *for a night? Why ſhouldſt thou be as a man aſtonied, as a mighty man that cannot ſave? yet thou O Lord, art in the midſt of us, and we are called by thy name.* See here how they are put to it. They acknowledge his Power, Goodneſſe, Preſence, yet they are not ſaved. He ſeemes to be like *Sampſon*, with his Locks cut off, as if he were not able to ſave, or would not do it: and this they wonder and ſtand amazed at, as a thing incredible, and impoſſible.

But, God makes them a ſhort and ſharp anſwer, (which may alſo ſerve us) verſ. 10. *Thus*, ſaith the Lord, *have they loved to wander, they have not refrained their feet; therefore the Lord doth not accept them.* If God be as *a wayfaring* man; ſometimes with a people, more often gone from them; ſometimes bleſſing, ſometimes croſſing them, and ſuffering them to fall under heavy preſſures, and never keeps an even and ſetled ſtation or courſe

courſe of proceeding with them, it is but that he hath learnt from themſelves (as I may ſo ſpeake:) they will be their own men; they will not be tyed to him ſo ſtrictly; they will have ſome libertie for their luſts, for the world, for the devill, for any thing: and loe here is the fruit of it, God will not be bound to, nor walke with them; he will not draw out that ſtrength, that goodneſſe, that compaſſion which might deliver them from the evils they howle under; He will neither heare them, nor any body elſe for them; not *Ieremy* himſelf, *verſ.* 11. not *Noah*, *Daniel*, and *Iob*, *Ezek.* 14. Nothing therefore, but a more ſolemne and ſtrict Covenant with God, will put us into a poſture and condition capable of perfect redreſſe of our grievances, how faire ſo ever either now, or hereafter, we may ſeeme to be for it. This is the ſecond uſe.

3. *Vſe*, of *Exhortation.*

Thirdly, *ſuffer*, I beſeech you, a few *words of Exhortation.* The returning Iewes (you ſee) call upon all their Nation to enter into *Covenant*. Give me leave then, to call upon You the *Repreſentative Body* of this whole Kingdome who ſtand here before the Lord this day to humble your ſoules, and let me alſo prevaile with you all, to *joyne your ſelves*, even this day, *to the Lord in an everlaſting Covenant that ſhall not be forgotten.* Make this day, a day in deed, a day of *Covenanting* with God, and God ſhall Covenant with you, and make it the beginning of more happines than ever you yet enjoyed.

Beloved, miſtake me not, my meaning extends not to engage you in any *Civill Covenant* and *Bond* for defence of your Municipall Lawes and Liberties. No doubt you will be able to find meanes enow (by the bleſſing of God) to ſetle thoſe things, in a legall way; eſpecially if you be carefull to Covenant with God.

Much

Much leſſe is it my purpoſe to draw you into that late *Eccleſiaſticall Oath and Covenant* (enjoyned by the late *Cant*[illegible]) which in my apprehenſion is little leſſe than a Combination and Conſpiracy againſt both King and State. My buſineſſe is, meerly to perſwade you into a *Religious Covenant with God*, as himſelfe hath preſcribed and commanded; and, his people, in the beſt times of Reformation, have readily admitted: namely, every man to ſtirre up himſelf & to lift up his Soule to take hold of God, to be glued and united to him, in all faithfulneſſe, ſincerity, care, and diligence, to be onely his for ever. 3. *Vſe. Exhortation.*

This if we doe, we need not care much for other Covenants: God will provide for that, and make a league for us even with the *beaſts of the field*, and with the *ſtones of the ſtreet*; he will *make* our *Exactors peace*, and our *Officers righteouſneſſe*, violence *ſhall no more be heard in the Land, nor waſting, nor deſtruction within our borders*; our very *walls* ſhall be *ſalvation*, and our *Gates praiſe*. He will be a God of Covenants, and take care for our eſtates, Lawes, liberties, lives, children and all that belong to us, when once this is done. Iſa. 60. 17. 18.

Therfore I beſeech you, yea, I require you in the name of the God of heaven, whoſe you are, whom you ſerve, before whom you ſtand, and from whom you expect ſalvation in the midſt of the Earth, as well as in heaven, that you forthwith enter into this bond. Expect no aſſiſtance, no ſucceſſe in any of your Conſultations, in any Lawes that you agree upon, till you have fully brought your hearts to this point, to follow the Lord fully; to be no more for your ſelves than you would have the deareſt wife of your boſome to be for any other man in the world; but, to be wholly for the Lord, to imploy and improve all your wit, abilities, induſtry, Counſells,

3. *Vse. Exhortation.* actions, estate, honour, and lives to promote his service and honour, what ever become of your selves and yours for doing of it. Say not as some Jeerers (of whom it is hard to judge whether their malice or ignorance be the greater) doe, that there needes no more Covenants than what we made in Baptisme, and that all other Covenants savour strongly of faction and the Puritan Leaven. For, so Gods people of old made a *Covenant*, by *Circumcision*, and after by *Sacrifice*, that is, in every *sacrifice* which they offered, they did renew their Covenant begun in *Circumcision*. Nevertheless, God thought it necessary often to call them out to strike another solemn Covenant with him besides the former. You have already heard that so soone as the Israelites were gone out of Egypt, & entred a little way in the wilderness, he put them upon a *Covenant*. When he brought them neer to *Canaan*, he required another solemne *Covenant* of them. And when *Ioshuah* had brought them into *Canaan*, and divided to each of them the lot of his inheritance, he drew them into another solemne *Covenant*. *Iosh.* 24. So that here was Covenant upon Covenant, and yet can no man (without blasphemy) charge it with any Puritan humour, faction, or any thing superfluous or uncomely for the Greateſt on earth to submit unto.

Gen. 17. 10.

Psal. 50. 5.

Exod. 19.

Deut. 29.

That I may a little more enforce this duty, and quicken you to the imbracing of it, give me leave to present you with some *Motives* further to presse you to it, and with some few *Directions* to guide you in it.

Motives to a Covenant.

1. For, *Motives*.

1. Our many *Deliverances.*

Consider. 1. how many, great, admirable, and even miraculous deliverances God hath given us; What great things he hath done for us. No Nation under heaven can say more to his praise, in this kind, than we have

have cauſe to do. Our Great deliverances out of *Babylon*, from the *Spaniſh Invaſion*, from the *Gun-powder Treaſon*, and from many other evils and feares, do all call upon you for a Covenant. Yea, even the preſent Mercy and Opportunitie of opening that Ancient, Regular and Approved Way of cure of thoſe publique evils that threaten confuſion and deſolation to all, pleades hard for the ſame dutie. But, among all theſe, I deſire You of that Great and honourable Body of the Parliament, to reflect ſadly upon that Stupendious Deliverance from the *Gun-powder Treaſon*, which more eſpecially and immediately was bent againſt You. For, albeit the ruine of the whole Kingdome was in their Eye who were the Curſed inſtruments of Antichriſt, and of the Devill his Father, in that helliſh Deſigne; yet, no blow could have come at us, but through Your ſides. And, albeit ſome of You that have the honour to be members of this preſent Parliament, were then unborn; yet, had that Plot taken effect, ſcarce any of You had been this day in being, to have ſate there now, but had long ſince been covered and buryed under the aſhes of confuſion. Thinke now, whether ſuch a preſervation deſerve leſſe at Your hands, than to give Your ſelves to your Great Deliverer, for ſo Great a Deliverance, whereby three Nations deſtinated at once to Death, received no leſſe than a joyfull reſurrection from the Dead, and were again *born at once*.

3. *Vſe. Exhortation.* Motives.

Therefore, let not this Great mercy ſeeme ſmall in Your eyes. And, remember too, that you may have as much need of God another time: nay, you know not what need you may have of him this preſent Parliament. You cannot be ignorant of the many murmures and more than whiſperings of ſome deſperate and deviliſh

3. *Vse. Exhortation.* Motives.

conception ſuſpected to be now in the womb of the Jeſuiticall faction: And, how neere it may be to the birth, or how prodigious it may prove being born, I take not upon me to divine: but this we are all ſure of, that what ever it be which they are big withall, it ſhall not want the leaſt graine of the utmoſt extremitie of malice and miſchiefe that all the wit, power, and induſtry of Hell it ſelf can contribute unto it; and, that they labour, as a woman in travaile, to be ſpeedily delivered of it.

What dangers, and what cauſe of feare there may be at the preſent, I leave to your Wiſdome to conſider. But this be confident of, if Deliverances already received can prevaile with you for a *Covenant*, that Covenant will be your ſecuritie; for it will certainly engage all the power and wiſdome of the Great and only wiſe God of heaven and earth to be on your ſide for ever. So that if God himſelf have power enough, wiſdome enough, and care enough, you cannot miſcarry; *no weapon that is formed againſt you ſhall proſper*, no plot, *no gates of hell ſhall prevaile againſt you*. And, if he have goodneſſe enough, mercy enough, bowels enow in him, he will then alſo, raine down aboundance of trueth, righteouſneſſe, juſtice, peace and plentie upon all Corners of the Land from whence, and on whoſe errand, You are now come together. Therefore it becomes you, above all others, to be firſt in a *Covenant*.

2. There can be no full enjoying of God, without a Covenant.

2. Conſider that, till we do this, there cannot be ſuch a full enjoying of God, as otherwiſe there might be. Indeed, the perfect fruition of God is not to be expected till we come to heaven, but yet we might have much more of God, even in this life, than now we have, could we be perſwaded to ſuch a *Covenant* with him.

Whatſoever experience we have of him now in any deliverance

deliverance beſtowed, it would be doubled, if, upon the deliverance received, we would thus be *joyned* to him. Nor is this a notion or conceit only, but a reall trueth. 3. *Vſe.* *Exhortation.*

For, marke what He ſaith to his people, *Hoſ.* 2. *verſ.* 19, 20. *I will marry thee unto me for ever, I will betroath thee unto me in righteouſneſſe, and in Iudgement, and in loving kindneſſe, and in mercies, I will even marry thee unto me in faithfulneſſe, and thou ſhalt know the Lord.* He that enters into Covenant with God, is *betroathed*, yea even *married* to him: And how married? even to the partaking of all his goods, of all he hath, yea of himſelf, and of all that he is. As the wife may ſay, *Vbi tu Caius, ego Caia*; and, as *Laban* ſometimes, of *Iacobs* wives, children, and cattell, *Theſe daughters are my daughters, and theſe children are my children, and theſe cattell are my cattell, and all that thou ſeeſt are mine:* So a man once *married* to the Lord by *Covenant*, may without arrogancy ſay, this *righteouſneſſe* is my righteouſneſſe, this *judgement* is my judgement, this *loving kindneſſe, theſe mercies, this faithfulneſſe* which I ſee in thee, and all that thou haſt is mine, for my comfort, ſupply, ſupport, direction, ſalvation, and what not? Motives. *Gen.* 31. 43.

And take notice of that phraſe, *Thou ſhalt know the Lord.* Did they not *know* him before? Yes; but never in ſuch a manner, with ſuch a *Knowledge*, at leaſt in ſuch a meaſure. They ſhall now know him in ſuch neere, familiar, ſweet and ineffable expreſſions of his deereſt, deepeſt, choyceſt conjugal love, as they never taſted, nor could taſte of before.

We know how it is with a wife married to a loving husband. They loved one another before marriage, and many expreſſions of a ſpeciall love paſſed betweene them, but they never enjoyed one another fully till the

3. *Vſe. Exhortation.* Motives. marriage was ſolemnized. Then, there is not only a more intimate manifeſtation of fervent, intire, loyall, chaſte love; but a further enlarging and ſtretching out of mutuall affections to each other, than they could poſſibly have beleeved they ſhould ever have reached unto, till now experience aſſure them of it. And even thus it is between us and God. Is he Good in deliverances? have we taſted of his love already? Oh how great would his goodneſſe be, how full of grace, mercy, bountie; and, how would he communicate even whole rivers of all theſe to that Soule that would once come up to him, and cloſe with him in an *everlaſting Covenant*! *All the wayes of the Lord are mercy and trueth, unto ſuch as* (make, and) *keep Covenant with him, Pſal.25.10.*

3. No buckling to the worke God calls us unto, without a Covenant. 3. Conſider that what ever worke God calls You to, Yee will never buckle thoroughly to it, till you have entred into *Covenant* with him. An apprentiſe boy when he goes to a Maſter upon tryall onely, his minde is now on, then off againe; ſometimes he could like the trade, by and by his minde hangs after his Mother at home, or after ſome other courſe of life, and he nenever ſets cloſe to his buſineſſe, till he be bound. When once the Indentures be ſealed, and he enrolled, he knowes there is now no more time to deliberate, but he muſt fall to his buſines, or elſe take what happens for his idleneſſe and negligence. So is it with a wife; if ſhe be but onely promiſed, or betroathed to a man, ſhe may come to his houſe, and caſt an eye up and downe; but it is rather to obſerve, than to act: ſhe may perhaps caſt out a word now and then ſomewhat freely alſo; but ſhe never ſets her ſelfe to guide the houſe, or to doe any thing to purpoſe, till ſhe be married: then, *ſhe careth for the things of the world*; that is, with all poſſible diligence looking

looking to, and managing of the buſineſſe of the family committed to her, *how ſhe may pleaſe her husband:* all her thoughts, care, diligence run this way; ſhe makes it her buſineſſe that ſhe muſt ſtick unto, and daily manage as a part of the marriage Covenant. And thus alſo it will be with you. You have much worke under your hands, and are likely to have more; and I hope you deſire to doe all in truth of heart, for God, and not for ends of your owne: but let me tell you, this will never be done throughly till once you be *marryed* to him by ſolemne *Covenant*. Then, will you *care indeed for the things of the Lord, how you may pleaſe the Lord,* in every cauſe, in every Anſwer to any Petition, and in every Vote of any Bill, or ſentence. You would then think, when you come to manage, debate, vote, any Queſtion, "I am the Lords, "not mine owne, not my friends; will this I doe, ſtand "with my Covenant? will it pleaſe God? will it be pro-"fitable for the State? is it agreeable to Juſtice and equi-"tie? Then, on with it, no man ſhall divert, or take me off. But, till then, one will entreate for his friend, another for his; one will make you one way, another would draw you another way; and they are both your friends, and you knowe not how to deny either: and thus are you even torne in peeces betweene them, in ſo much as you ſometimes reſolve to be abſent, or to ſit ſtill and ſay nothing; or, to gratifie him that hath moſt power with You, be the Cauſe what it will. But when once the Covenant is ſealed, all this will be at an end; You will quickly ſtop your eares againſt all perſwaſions that may hinder Juſtice and Reformation; and, when this is known, men will ſoone forbeare alſo to trouble You with ſuch ſolicitations.

3. *Vſe.* *Exhortation.* Motives. 1 *Cor.* 7, 34.

Againe fourthly; Wicked men ſtick not *at a Covenant with* Hell.

4. Wicked men Covenant with Hell.

3. *Vse. Exhortation.* Motives. *Isay.* 28.

with death and hell it self, so they may but satisfie their Lusts; though they know the end thereof will be damnation. Oh then shall not we much more make a *Covenant* with our *God* to do his will, which will be beneficiall and comfortable both here and hereafter, and procure a full torrent of his mercies, bountie, grace, and eternall life, to flow in upon us!

5. The Devil himselfe will do no great matters for his vassals without a Covenant.

5. Consider that the Devill himself will have a *Covenant* from all his vassals that expect any extraordinary matters from him; else, he will not be engaged to be at their Command. There is not a Witch that hath the Devill at her beck, but she must seale a Covenant to him, sometimes with her bloud, sometimes by other rites and devices, and perhaps he must suck her too (as in those hellish bargaines you know they use;) and then; he is for her, during the time agreed upon. And shall we think God will be so cheap, as to be (with reverence be it spoken) at our Command, to help, direct, assist, deliver and save us, who will not do so much for him as Witches and Sorcerers will do for the Devill?

In the 45 of *Isay*, vers. 11. there is a strong expression this way; *Thus saith the Lord, the Holy one of Israel, and his Maker, aske of mee things to come concerning my sonnes, and concerning the work of my hands Command ye mee.* It is not to be thought that God complementeth with his people, but is free and heartie in the expression of what they shall really find him. But marke; it *concernes his Sonnes*; that is, those that are truely in Covenant with him. This priviledge is for none else. So that the way to have God at *Command*, (with humilitie be it used) is to be his *sonnes* and *daughters* by *Covenant*. For, to whom it is said, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*, to them is it spoken, *I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sonnes*

ſonnes and daughters, ſaith the Lord Almightie, 2 Cor. 6. 18. And to them he ſaith alſo, *Command ye me.*

3. *Vſe. Exhortation.*

6. Conſider that it is the proper and chiefe buſineſſe of a *Faſt*, to enter into *Covenant* with God. You ſee it to be the practiſe of the Church in *Nehemiah's* time. And where this hath been omitted, the *Faſt* hath been loſt. God never accounted any of thoſe foure annuall ſolemne *Faſts* before mentioned, that were ſo long in uſe among the Jews, to be *faſts unto him*; but calles them *faſts to themſelves*, Zach. 7. 5, 6. Why, but becauſe they looked no further in their Faſts, but *to afflict their ſoules for a day, to bow down their heads as a bullruſh, and to ſpread ſack-cloth and aſhes under them*, and there an end. But they loſt all their labour, getting nothing from God but a chiding, and contempt.

Motives. 6. This is the proper worke of a Religious Faſt. *Nehem.* 9. *Iſay* 58.

And in trueth, when will we thus *joyne* our ſelves to the Lord, if not at a *Faſt?* Then, are our hearts in more than ordinary tune for ſuch a work, when we are brought to ſet our ſinnes before us, and humbly to confeſſe, bewaile and renounce them; when we have taken ſome paines with our Soules to ſoften, and melt them before the Lord; eſpecially if then they be in any meaſure raiſed up towards Him with any apprehenſion of his love in the pardon of ſo many and great ſinnes, even when the Soule is moſt caſt down for them. Then, I ſay ſtrike through the Covenant, or it will never be. If you let ſlip this opportunitie, you may perhaps never obtaine the like while you live; but either your ſelves may be cut off, or your hearts ſhut up in deſperate hardneſſe, like unto *Pharoah*, whom every deliverance, and new experience of Gods favour in taking off new evils, hardened more, and made worſe.

3. *Vse. Exhortation.* Motives. 7. This very Day began the second Reformation of Religion.

7. In the last place (and let it not have the least force of perswasion) remember and consider that this day, even this very day, the 17. of *November*, 82. yeeres sithence, began a new resurrection of this Kingdome from the dead, our second happy Reformation of Religion by the auspitious entrance of our late Royal *Deborah* (worthy of eternall remembrance and honour) into her blessed and glorious Reigne; and that, from thenceforth Religion thrived, and prospered under her Government with admirable successe, against a whole world of oppositions from Popish factors at home and abroad: So as the very Gates of hell were never able to extinguish that Light, which God by her meanes hath set up amongst us.

Consider I beseech you, that it is not without a speciall Providence that this your meeting was cast upon this very day (for, I presume, little did you think of the 17 of *November*, when you first fixed on this day for your *Fast*;) that, even from thence, one hammer might be borrowed to drive home this nayle of Exhortation; that the very memory of so blessed a work begun on this very day, might throughly inflame you with desire to enter into a *Covenant*; and so, to go forward to perfect that happy Reformation, which yet in many parts lyes unpolished and unperfect.

Oh suffer not that *doore of hope* by Her set open this day, to be again shut, for want of a *Covenant*. If you would indeed honour Her precious memory; yea, honour God and your selves, and not only continue the possession of what she (as a most glorious Conduit pipe) hath transmitted to us, but perfect the work; set upon this duty of *joyning your selves to the Lord in an everlasting Covenant*

Covenant that ſhall not be forgotten. And ſo have you the *Motives.* 3. *Vſe. Exhortation.*

2. I ſhall now ſhut up all with ſome few *Directions* to help us in it. And here, paſſing by what hath been already ſpoken touching the *preparatives* to it, the *Subſtance* of it, and the *properties* required in it, I ſhall only give you theſe ſixe ſubſequent *Directions.* *Meanes* how to enter into Covenant.

1. Give a Bill of divorce to all your Luſts, or kill them out-right. This Covenant is a marriage-Covenant, and there is no marrying with God, ſo long as your former husband, your baſe corruptions, your ſwearing, riot, drunkenneſſe, uncleanneſſe, pride, oppreſſion, and what ever elſe your ſoules *know to be the plague of your own hearts*, remaine alive and undivorced. *For the woman which hath an husband, is bound by the Law to her husband ſo long as he liveth:* but, if he be once *dead, ſhe is free from that Law*, Rom. 7. Therefore ſend theſe packing, in the firſt place. A wiſe man will never marry a ſtrumpet, nor with any woman, that hath another husband: his wife that ſhall be only his own, none elſe ſhall have intereſt in her. Much leſſe then, will the Holy and Jealous God admit of any Spouſe that is wedded to any luſt, and ſo continueth. Say then, what wilt thou now do? wilt thou ſtill keep thy darling luſt? Haſt thou been a ſwearer, and ſo thou wilt be? a drunkard, an uncleane perſon, an oppreſſour, a prophane *Eſau*, and wilt be ſo ſtill? Know, that God will none of thee, but abhorres all ſuch as thou art. He will admit none into Covenant but ſuch as *touch not the uncleane thing, but ſeparate* from it. To them only it is, that he promiſeth, *I will be their God, and they ſhall be my people.* 1. Give a Bill of Divorce to all your Luſts. 2 *Cor.* 6.

2. More eſpecially purge out and caſt away (as *a Menſtruous cloth*) all *Idols* and *Idolatry* in particular. All our 2. More eſpecially caſt out all *Idols* and *Idolatry.*

 Luſts *Pſal.* 5. 4.

3. *Vse.* *Exhortation* Meanes.

Lusts are lothsome to his stomach, but nothing is so abominable to his Soule, as *Idolatry*. This is that spirituall whoredome which meritoriously dissolves the marriage bond where it is already knit, and lies as a barre in the way to a Covenant with God, where yet it is not made. This was it for which the Lord proceeded so severely, first against the ten Tribes, and then against the residue, as you all know. For this, the Land spewed them out. And where ever God promiseth to recall them, he usually premiseth this, (which should first be done) *From all your Idols will I cleanse you, Ezek.* 36.25. *Ephraim also shall say, What have I to do any more with Idols? Hos.* 14.8. and all shall cast them away with detestation, saying, *Get thee hence, Isay.* 30.22.

Ier. 44.4. 2 *Kin.* 17.

Every Idol is that great *Image of Iealousy*, which the Lord can by no meanes endure, and which will certainly be the destruction of King and People, where ever it is entertained, especially if againe received in, after it hath been once ejected. A sad example whereof we have in *Iudah*, where, after *Iosiah had taken away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve the Lord onely*, the Act of Resumption of Idols and Idolatry by the succeeding Kings (although it is probable they did it onely *secretly* like those in 2 *Kin.* 17.9.) became the ruine of those Kings, and Kingdomes.

2 *Chro.* 34.33.

Beloved, let me speake freely, for I speake for God, and for all your safeties. You cannot be ignorant of the grosse Idolatry daily encreasing among us, and committed not (as adultery) in Corners onely, but in the open light; people going to, and coming from the Masse in great multitudes, and that as ordinarily, openly, confidently as others go to and from our Churches.

And

And I doubt not but ſome of you doe know the number of Maſſes to exceed that of Sermons. 3. *Vſe. Exhortation.*

Whoſe heart bleeds not over this prodigious growth of Popery and over flowing of Popiſh Maſſes? Who knowes not, that in the Maſſe is committed the moſt abominable Idolatry that ever the Sunne beheld in the Chriſtian world? Who remembers not with indignation and horror, how often that inſatiable Idol hath bathed it ſelfe in the bloud of many of our Anceſtors and Progenitors? And can any be ſo ſilly as to beleeve, that it will reſt ſatisfied till it ſwim againe in our bloud alſo; unleſſe we will joyne with Idolaters, and ſo periſh in Hell? For what ever ſome men talke of the poſſibility of the ſalvation of ſome perſons in that Church, (as they call it) yet it is agreed on all hands, among us, that, for thoſe of our owne Nation and once of our owne Church where the light hath ſo long ſhined in ſo much brightneſſe, ſo as they have both received & profeſſed it; if they ſhall (whether to gratifie a Parent, a wife, husband, friend, Maſter &c.) put out their owne eyes, and returne backe to *Babylon* from whence they were once ſet free, their caſe is very deſperate and diſmall, and *it had been better for them never to have knowne the way of righteouſneſſe, then after they have knowne it to turne from the holy Commandement once delivered unto them.* Therefore I beſeech you to take care of theſe above others. *Meanes.* 2. Pet. 2.

Nor ſpeake I this, onely to prevent a publique toleration, (which I hope, through the care of our Pious King, and your diligence, our eyes ſhall never ſee) but to put on Authority to the utter rooting out of that abomination, although committed in ſecret; and with connivence onely. 2 Kin. 17. 9.

3. *Vse.* *Exhortation* Meanes.

If then you will not halt betweene Two opinions, if you will be thorough for God, and follow him fully, downe with all *Idols* and *Idolatry* through the Kingdome, so farre as the making of the Lawes yet more ſtrict and full for that purpoſe, may effect it. Till then, you may, if you will, talke of a *Covenant*, and thinke to doe great matters: but that Great God who is ſo jealous of his glory in that, above all other things, will abhorre all Covenants with you. And if you, having now ſuch opportunity and power, ſhall not throughly cleanſe the Land of theſe ſpirituall whoredomes ſo boldly facing and even out-facing the glorious Goſpell profeſſed among us; be ſure, that, in ſtead of a bleſſing upon your Conſultations and proceedings, you will draw downe a Curſe that will cleave to you, and goe home with you, and ſcatter like poyſon over all parts and Corners of the Kingdome, till all be conſumed and become a deſolation.

You all I thinke, agree upon the neceſſity of a great Reformation. Where ſhould you begin then, but where God ever begins? Looke into the Stories of *Aſa*, *Iehoſaphat*, *Hezekiah*, *Ioſiah*, and even of *Manaſſeh* himſelf, (the groſſeſt Idolater and moſt bloudy Tyrant that ever reigned in *Iudah*) when once God had throughly humbled him; and you ſhall ever finde that they began their grand Reformation at *Idols*, and *Idolatry* committed with them. I ſpeake not this to backe or countenance any tumultuous or ſeditious ſpirits that have lately been ſtirred up to doe things without Commiſſion; but to You, whom God hath duely called to the worke, and indiſpenſibly requires it at your hands.

3. Execute true Iudgement. *Iſa.* 58. 6.

3. *Execute true Iudgement* and Juſtice. *Looſe the band of wickedneſſe, undoe the heavy burdens, let the oppreſſed goe free,*

free, and break every yoke of the oppreſſor. This is a maine part of an *acceptable Faſt*, and therefore muſt be performed of all that will enter into Covenant with God. And this was part of Gods Anſwer to the Jewes enquiring of the Prophet whether they ſhould continue their ſolemne Faſts? *Zach.* 7. Therefore herein deale impartially and throughly, for hereby the Throne it ſelfe is eſtabliſhed. It is true, a difference muſt be put between thoſe that are only led on in evill wayes by others, and thoſe that are leaders of others: but it becomes not me to preſcribe to you in this caſe, your own wiſdome will teach you that. Only I am to pray you, that if you ſhall find any eſcapes to have been made in the Ordinary Courts of Juſtice, in the condigne puniſhment of *Murder*, and *Idolatry*, take notice of them, and there be ſure to ſtrike home, as *Samuel* did where *Saul* himſelfe had been too indulgent. There is nothing makes you ſuch faire Images of God (in the relation you now ſtand) as due execution of Juſtice and Judgement. Therefore, if you will indeed enter into a Covenant, let this be done.

3. *Vſe. Exhortation.* Meanes.

4. Do your beſt to draw as many others as you can the ſame way. Parents and Maſters are bound to take care that their children and families do feare, and ſerve God, as well as themſelves. And You who now appeare before him in behalf of the kingdome, as you muſt enter into a Covenant for them as well as for your ſelves, ſo muſt you do your utmoſt that they alſo for themſelves may paſſe under the ſame Covenant, with you. The repreſentative Body of Iſrael that ſtood before the Lord to make a Covenant, in *Deut.* 29. 15. made it not only for themſelves and ſuch as were preſent, but for all that were *abſent* alſo. And *Ioſiah* when he entred into

4. Draw others alſo.

3. *Use. Exhortation.* Meanes. into a Covenant himself, he not only caused *all that were present of Iudah at the house of the Lord*, to stand to it, 2 *Chron.* 34. 32. But he *made all Israel to serve, even to serve the Lord their God*, vers. 33. that is, to strike a Covenant with him. Therefore take care that all others, when you returne home, may make a Covenant before the Lord to walk after him in all his Commandements: that God may be set up more and more, and the hearts of all men may be lifted up in the wayes of the Lord to take hold of his Covenant also. If you do not this, you do nothing: for more is required at your hands, than of private persons, who yet are bound to call upon others (as the men in my Text) saying, *Come and let us joyne our selves unto the Lord in an everlasting Covenant.*

5. Set up Way-markes to *Zion*. 5. Would you have this to be done, namely, that all should *appeare before God in Zion*, for this purpose? Then set up *Way-markes* to direct them thither. Take speciall care that the Ordinances of God be set up, and held up, in more puritie, and plentie. Down at once with all inventions and fancies of men, which corrupt and adulterate the pure worship of God. Let none but He be worshipped, and let no worship be thrust upon him which himselfe hath not prescribed. Herein especially (yet still within your bounds) be zealous, and quit your selves like men.

Above all, take better order for the more frequent, and better performance, and due countenancing of that now-vilified (but highly necessary) Ordinance of Preaching, which, albeit it be Gods own arme and power unto salvation, is yet brought into so deep contempt (and by none more than by those who should labour most to hold up the honour of it) that it is made a matter of scorne, and become the odious Character of a

Puritan,

Puritan, to be an assiduous Preacher. Yea, so farre have some men run mad this way, that it is held a crime deserving Censure in the highest Ecclesiasticall Court in this Kingdome, to tell but a few Clergy men out of a Pulpit, that it is an essentiall part of the Office of a Bishop, to Preach *. Some of you know that I belye them not.

3. *Vse. Exhortation.* Meanes.

* But *ab initio* it was not so. The third part of the *Hom.* against the *perill of Idolatry*, speaking of the Bishops of the Primitive times, saith, that *They were then Preaching Bishops, and more often seene in Pulpits than in Princes Palaces, more often occupied in his Legacy, who said, Go yee into the whole world, and preach the Gospel to all men, than in Embassages and affaires of Princes of this world*, pag. 59. edit. 1623.

And is it not then high time to vindicate the honour of Preaching from those virulent and scurrilous tongues and pens, that have of late daies (more then ever) blasphem'd this Ordinance; and, to take more pitie of the many darke and barren parts of this Kingdome, where many scarce have a Sermon in seven yeeres; nay some (as divers of worth do credibly report) not in their whole lives? Hath not God himselfe said plainly, [a] *Where there is no vision the people perish?* Is it not his own complaint, [b] *My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge?* And how so? thus; *for a long season Israel had been without a teaching Priest, and without the Law*, 2 *Chro.* 15. 3. And mark too, that while they had no teaching Priest they were *without the true God* also. For, there is no coming at the *true God*, in the ordinary way, but by a *teaching Priest*. [c] *How* shall they heare without a Preacher? And [d] *it pleaseth God by the foolishnesse of preaching to save them that beleeve:* and [e] *faith comes by hearing.*

[a] *Prov* 29. 18.
[b] *Hos.* 4. 6.
[c] *Rom.* 10. 14.
[d] 1 *Cor.* 1. 2.
[e] *Rom.* 10. 17.

Wherefore I dare pronounce, that while so many thousands within the Kings Dominions, especially in *England*, *Wales*, and *Ireland*, are still suffered to *sit in such darknesse and in the shadow of death*, and so to perish for ever for want of constant, sound, profitable Preaching, it is impossible that they should be capable of a Covenant with God; or, that it may be truely said, that the maine body of these Kingdomes are in case to

3. *Vse. Exhortation.* Meanes.

make a Covenant with him; unlesse you, the Representative Body thereof, take more care than ever yet hath been taken in this behalfe.

I know the many plea's of many idle droanes and mercilesse men to excuse and defend an unpreaching, or seldome-preaching Ministry; but all their fig-leaves are too short to cover their own shame, and the nakednesse of those poore perishing people whom such men make naked, to their own destruction also.

To tell us, that preaching indeed is necessary for the planting of a Church, but not so afterwards: is nothing but to bewray their owne sottish ignorance. Is not the word preached, the *milk* and food whereby men are, and must be continually nourished *to grow* up in the body of Christ, as well as the *Seed* whereof they are first begotten unto Christ? And can men that are born, and living, live safely, or at all, without continuall supply of food convenient for them?

1 *Pet.* 2. 2. *Ephes.* 4. *Iam.* 1. 18. 1 *Pet.* 1. 23.

What fearefull trifling is this in a businesse of such high Concernment! Good *Iehoshaphat*, when *his heart was* once *lift up in the wayes of the Lord*, tooke other order: for, he sent not only some of the prime *Levites* and *Priests*, who *taught in Iudah and had the Book of the Law of the Lord with them, and went about through all the Cities of Iudah and taught the people*, 2 *Chron.* 17. 8, 9. but with them, he sent divers of his *Princes and chiefe Officers, Benhail, Obadiah*, and sundry others, to see that this work should be effectually done, *vers.* 7. yea (as our late Translation hath it) *he sent to them to teach in the Cities of Iudah*: that is, that they should take as much care of the businesse, by putting on the Priests and Levites, as if they themselves in person were bound to do all the worke. And hence it was, that God gave this testimony

teſtimony of *Iehoſhaphat*, that *he walked in the firſt wayes of his father David*, verſ. 3. that *he had riches and honour in abundance*, verſ. 5. and that *the feare of the Lord fell upon all the Kingdomes of the Land round about Iudah, ſo that they made no warre againſt Iehoſhaphat*, verſ. 10. So that, beſide the ſpirituall benefit, a Preaching Miniſtry is one of the beſt advantages to ſecure a State; it is (you ſee) not only an hedge, but *walles and Bulwarks* unto any Kingdome. 3. *Vſe. Exhortation.* Meanes.

And yet, as many of our blind guides and Idol Shepheards care not to erect Preaching where there is none, ſo doe they all they can to cheat and defraud thoſe of it who doe or would enjoy it, ſometimes by pulling it downe where it is ſet up, and (to fill up the meaſure of their wickedneſſe) glorying in it, when they have done; ſometimes by ſtriking out the teeth of it, that if men will needes preach, yet it ſhall be to little purpoſe; onely a frigid, toothleſſe, ſapleſſe diſcourſe, never piercing deeper than the eare. If the Preacher come home to convince the Conſcience of particulars that need reformation, (which yet was the old courſe, and ſhould be ſo ſtill) the Preacher is either derided as worthy of nothing but contempt, or elſe cenſured as indiſcreet, raſh, factious, and ſeditious.

And leaſt men ſhould ſurfeit of preaching, how be all Sermons, in the afternoones of the Lord's dayes, cryed downe, as the markes of Iudaizing Puritaniſme, and as a burden intolerable to the people!

Indeed, it is true, that when Authority firſt commanded the afternoones Sermon to be converted into *Catechiſing*, there was not onely no hurt done, but a wiſe and needfull courſe preſcribed for the beſt edifying of popular Auditories. But as ſome have handled the mat-

3. *Vse. Exhortation.* Meanes:

ter, it is now become a great hindrance to edification. If a Minister would carefully and solidly open the severall heads of Catechisme, confirme them by Scripture, and bring them home by some short and familiar application most sutable to vulgar eares and Capacities; I hold it simply the most profitable exercise (at least for one part of the day) that can be set up for the increase of sound knowledge and Piety: and pity it is that this is so much neglected. *But this*, say our new Masters, *is worse than preaching*. Therefore they enjoyne all to keep onely to the bare Questions and Answers of the *Child's* Catechisme. And if any presume to adde any exposition or instruction, he is by some hurried from post to pillar, and censured as a pernitious Malefactor.

And as they have thus thrust all preaching (be it but Catechetically) out of the Church in the afternoones of the Lords day, so have they shut divers able, godly, discreet Pastors out of their owne Pulpits on the weeke dayes, even in Populous Townes, where the Ministers were willing to bestow their paines, (and so for many yeares with great fruit and comfort to the whole Country had done) *gratis*, for the refreshing of many hungry Soules who had no preaching at home in their owne Parishes, and dare not stirre thence on the Lords day to seeke it abroad.

Nay, some of your Cathedrall Men are come to that passe, that when any Sermon (such as it is) is preached in the Cathedrall or Collegiate Church, no Sermon must then be preached in the Parish Church or Churches adjoyning, meerely to uphold the pompe and State of the Greater Church, and for feare of lessening the Auditory, or diminishing the honour of the Preacher, (who many times deserves little enough) where as not

a fourth part of the Congregation (by this meanes defrauded of Preaching in the Pariſh Church) can poſſibly come within hearing, or ken of the Cathedrall Pulpitman. 3. *Vſe. Exhortation.* Meanes.

Oh Beloved! are theſe, wayes to ſet forth Chriſt to the people for their ſalvation, to diſplay God in all his glorious Attributes and Perfections, and to bring them within view of the beauties and Excellencies of God in his Covenant and Communion with his people, ſo as to draw them to a Covenant! Nay hence, hence it comes to paſſe that God is extremely diſhonoured, his Name blaſphemed, his day abominably prophaned, and his people run headlong (like beaſts to the Shambles) by droves, to Popery, Anabaptiſme, Familiſme, Atheiſme, and what not, that may caſt, and lock them under the hatches of everlaſting damnation.

——— *Quis talia fando,*
Temperet a lachrymis? ———

I know that ſome of thoſe Step-fathers and hard-hearted Wretches, who be indeed the chiefe (if not the onely) cauſe of all this, bluſh not to attribute the daily falling off of multitudes from our Church, to over-much Preaching: but this is as rationall, as was his mad opinion touching Saint *Paul*, that *much learning had made him mad.* Theſe are crying Abominations, that will cry as loud againſt you, as now they doe againſt the Authors of them, if you reforme them not.

Wonder not at my length, and heate in this point. It is a matter of greateſt Conſequence, and of all other moſt proper for a Preacher to be zealous in. And give me leave to tell you, that this muſt be put in the head of the Catalogue of your weightieſt Conſultations at this time, if you deſire ever to draw the people of this & the

3. *Vse. Exhortation.* minions into any Covenant and Communion with God, or to setle any thing for the good of your selves and countryes.

Meanes. King *Iames* indeed took commiseration of the grosse ignorance of multitudes in the North parts of this Kingdome, and sent some Preachers at his owne charge among them. A Pious and a Noble worke! But what through the unsetled wandrings, idlenesse, the superficiall and unprofitable performances of some of these Preachers, and what through the supine negligence of some in Authoritie, who should have looked better to those itinerary Ministers; most of that labour and charge was little better than lost. For, some of you know, that in no parts of the Kingdome hath there been such an increase of Papists, as in those very Corners, where that sleight meanes was used to reduce men from Popery.

I beseech you therefore by all the mercies of God, by all the Bowels of Christ in shedding of his deerest bloud for those precious Soules, who now, even by thousands and millions miserably perish in their ignorance and sins, that you would carefully reforme, or cast out all idle, unsound, unprofitable, and scandalous Ministers; and provide a sound, godly, profitable and setled Preaching Ministry in every Congregation through the Land and the annexed Dominions; and, to take no lesse care for their diligent and constant performance of their dutie both in life and Doctrine, as also for their liberall maintenance, (that may be still capable of improvement, as the times grow harder, and commodities deerer) that both themselves who preach the Gospel, and all theirs also, may cheerefully and comfortably live of the Gospel. And let us once see *Zion built up*, by your industry, *in perfect beautie.*

Lastly,

Laſtly, When you ſet upon this great buſineſſe of a *Covenant*, ſee that you do it out of *love* to God, and with all your heart: elſe, it will come to nothing. If you would to *Zion*, *your faces* muſt be ſet, and ſetled *thitherward*. If you would make a *Covenant*, you muſt not be unwilling, afraid, aſhamed to be accounted ſuch *Covenanters*, but do it with a ſteddy, open, undaunted countenance and reſolution. You muſt *love the name of your God to be his ſervants*, *Iſay* 56. 6. You have ſeen how *Aſa* and all his Kingdome did it; they both entred into Covenant, and they *ſwore it*, *with all their heart*, *and ſought him with their whole deſire*, *and he was found of them*, *and gave them reſt round about*.

3. *Vſe. Exhortation.* Meanes. 6. When a Covenant is to be made, do it with all the heart; and forget it not when it is made. 2 *Chro.* 15. 15.

Thus if you do, God ſhall be ſet up, Religion advanced, your grievances removed, you ſhall heare no more ſuch complainings in our ſtreets. All bleſſings ſhall follow, not your ſelves alone, but the whole Kingdome, in our King and his Government, in your Conſultations and proceedings, in the publique, ſetled, and glorious Peace, and proſperitie of both Church and State. The bleſſings of the Earth, in the Citie, the field, your bodies, poſteritie, in all your goings out and comings in; The bleſſings of heaven in the meanes of Grace, the beginnings and growth in grace, the light of Gods countenance which is better than life; and, after all, even the fulneſſe of both grace and glory in the full, cleare, and eternall fruition of God himſelfe in the higheſt heavens, ſhall all compaſſe, and Crowne you for ever.

Provided alwayes, that when once this Covenant is made, you take care that *it never be forgotten*, but heeded, minded, and performed; that as you cloſe with God, ſo you may alwayes continue with him. Then ſhall this whole

3. *Vse.* *Exhortation.* Meanes. whole nation and the children which are yet unborne praise and blesse the Lord for ever for this Parliament, and your endeavours in it. But I feele my self spent, and therefore must desist, yet with this hope, that my Reverend fellow-labourer designed for the other part of this worke, will begin where I leave, and set on with more strength what my weakness is not able to performe.

FINIS.

LONDON,
Printed by *I. L.* for *Philemon Stephens* and *Christopher Meredith*, at the signe of the Golden Lion in *Pauls* Church-yard. 1641.

Errata.

Pag. 30. lin. 28. read *arct.* pag. 45. lin. 2. r. *sit.* errors in the pointing, correct, or pardon.